

**VIRTUE THEORY AND THE MORAL  
CHALLENGE IN THE NIGERIAN  
EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**

By

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## CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this thesis titled: Virtue Theory and the Moral Challenge in the Nigerian Educational System was carried out under my supervision by Osiyemi, Emmanuel Sunday.

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## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the “I AM that I AM” for being the secret of my **Being**. I also dedicate it to my Golden parents: Timothy Adebajo (of blessed memory) and Esther Omoniyi OSIYEMI for their unquantifiable love and for their efforts in instilling positive moral values in me.

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## ABSTRACT

Virtue theory holds that the cultivation of good character is an essential moral goal and the focus of moral education is to raise rational and morally virtuous persons. This is rooted in a philosophical account of the moral life and conduct from which educational aims are derived. Previous studies on challenges in the Nigerian educational system focussed on religious instruction to the neglect of moral education. This study, therefore, examined virtue theory which emphasises the promotion of good character and conduct, with a view to establishing its importance in grooming morally virtuous persons and curbing moral decadence in the Nigerian educational system.

The study adopted Aristotle's theory of Habituation, which emphasises reason, habit and training as features that collectively determine the emergence of a moral person. Eleven relevant texts in Ethics: Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (NE), *Eudemean Ethics* (EE), MacIntyre's *After Virtue* (AV), Nel Nodding's *Care Ethics* (CE) and Habermas's *Discourse Ethics* (DE), and twenty-five in Philosophy of Education including Carr's and Steutel's *Virtue Ethics and Moral Education* (VEME), Akinpelu's *Essays in Philosophy and Education* (EPE), Halstead's and Mclaughlin's *Education in Morality* (EM), Gilligan's *In a Different Voice* (IDV) and Sprod's *Philosophical Discussion in Moral Education* (PDME), were purposively selected because they dwelt on virtue theory, habit training, practical reason and educational development. Conceptual analysis was employed to clarify concepts such as education, morality and religion, while reconstruction was used to show the centrality of virtue theory to resolving moral challenges in the Nigerian educational system.

Texts in Ethics emphasised that the cultivation of moral virtue requires practical wisdom, emotions, choices, values, perceptions, attitudes, expectations and sensibilities, the possession of which result in morally virtuous individuals (NE, EE, DE). Religious education focussed on personal faith, beliefs, attitudes and practices of a particular religion and therefore, is inadequate in inculcating virtues that would transcend religion and other divides to promote positive attitudinal change in persons (EPE, IDV). In Philosophy of Education the upbringing of the child requires the concurrent development of both the moral and intellectual components of education as embedded in the cultural and social practices of a people (VEME, EPE, AV). Critical intervention revealed that religious approach to the problem of moral decadence is inadequate and that an effective framework for resolving the moral challenge in Nigerian educational system requires habituation and the training of persons in some positive cultural and social values, which a training in religious education alone cannot provide.

Moral challenge in the Nigerian educational system has persisted due to emphasis on religious instruction, which focussed on beliefs and practices of a particular religion to the neglect of moral education. Therefore, virtue theory, will resolve the moral challenge in the Nigerian educational system.

**Keywords:** Moral and religious education, Nigerian educational system, Virtue theory

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## **Introduction**

The educational system and by extension, Nigeria is presently plagued by a breakdown in moral values which is seriously affecting both the individual and the society at large. In particular, indiscipline, including violent crimes, illegal use of drugs, rape, corruption, bad governance are few of the vices ravaging our campuses in particular and the country in general. This breakdown of values has greatly impacted negatively on all facets of life. Of great importance is the recognition that this decay is fast eroding our educational system. The moral decay in the educational system is worsened by the phenomenon of campus cultism that is aggravating violence in its varied forms such as murder, student unrest, examination malpractice, impersonation, forgery, just to mention but a few. Hence, moral vices such as corruption, injustice, bribery, sexual abuse and a general moral decadence, which have pervaded all levels of social and political life; the civil service, teachers and doctors and even the armed forces and the police, are direct reflections of moral deficits of the Nigerian society.

In an attempt to resolve this problem some scholars have argued that the re-energization of religious knowledge in the school curriculum is the panacea. Among these scholars are Cully, K.B. and Miller, C.M. For example, Cully avers that the objective of Christian religious knowledge is "...to help persons to be aware of God's self disclosure and to seek love in Jesus Christ; to respond in faith and love-to the end that they may know who they are and what their human situation means, to grow as sons of God."<sup>1</sup> However, these scholars often confuse moral education with religious instruction. They argue that the reintroduction of religious instruction will resolve the moral crises beleaguering the society. This misconception is however rejected by Buchanan when he argued that the erroneous belief that the church as the nearest kin to the home can help fill the growing need for moral education has failed. In his words, "As the nearest in kin to the home, the church has thus attempted to fill the growing need, but without success."<sup>2</sup> Religion, unfortunately has rather than resolving the moral issues at stake, heightened discrimination and violence among different religious groups. This was emphasised by Kenneth Dion when he claims that "Discrimination is one of the most significant issues regarding religion in education. This problem can cause so much harm on the victims of the discrimination, most of the time without the aggressors even knowing the amount of harm they are causing"<sup>3</sup> In the past two decades, religion has

been at the centre of most violent conflicts around the world, thereby gaining notoriety as one of the prime security challenges confronting the world. Also, societies that are divided along religious lines are more prone to intense and prolonged conflict than those divided by political, territorial and ethnic differences. According to Omoluabi, P. as cited by Ebenezer Obadare religious groupings have these six peculiar characteristics according to which various Christian and Muslim denominations on the campuses tend to separate themselves from the 'Other'. These include; strong belief in God through a specific saviour; specific mode of religious worship; peculiar mode of dressing; prudish code of moral ethics; holier-than-thou attitude towards people of other denominations; and discriminatory interpersonal relationships. These characteristics cannot but stultify and disorient peaceful and progressive atmosphere<sup>4</sup>

This work is a response to the attempt at resolving the prevailing moral problem in our schools and by extension, in our nation. We argued in this work that attempts to resolve values crisis lie basically in the province of moral education which is distinct from religious instruction and the former is primarily within the domain of moral philosophy. The point we are making is that while we acknowledge the importance of religion to man and nation building, its sensitivity and a feeling of absolute dependence on other-worldly existence disqualify it from serving as foundation for moral education. For instance, J.G.Frazer in his book, *The Golden Bough* defines religion as “a propitiation or reconciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and of human life”<sup>5</sup> While religious knowledge can be taught in schools to enlighten its adherents, it does not have the universal appeal to function as basis for moral education. We do not however pretend that moral education is the only solution but that it is a key factor in resolving the current moral decadence. What is also most important is that the school is itself a token of social life in its reality. All in the school, as in the community, have equal rights and privileges; the school is an epitome of society, under a paternal government. Hence the school after the home becomes the pivot where civic virtues of forbearance, justice, truth telling, care and the social graces of kindness, courtesy, and the altruistic virtues are learnt and imbibed for the good of the individual and the society because the school is society, a community with an end and interests common to everyone. Thus, this study is undergirded by Aristotle’s virtue theory. Based on this, we argue that a cogni-moral education remains a pivot at perpetuating positive values and atmosphere for social order in the society. By cogni-

moral education, we mean a balanced education which is directed to the cognitive and moral development of children, youths in the school and the entire citizenry in the society as well as adult education advocacy.

### **Background to the Study**

Nigerian educational system is bedevilled in all fronts. The problems are multi-faceted; ranging from government non-provision of adequate funds for the running of schools, to over population in Nigerian educational system which has subsequently snowballed into all forms of moral vices and laxity in our schools. According to Samuel Atteh, Nigerian schools especially the higher institutions have been subjected to various abuse. In his words,

. In Nigeria, for example, about 21 major student riots occurred between 1948 and 1979, and over 3 dozen riots have taken place since 1980. These include the Ahmadu Bello University crisis of April 1986, the national student crisis of April-June 1988, the 1989 anti-structural adjustment programs riots and several other riots that took place between 1990-1993 on university campuses across the country. In May 1992, the Nigerian Military Government ordered the closure of the Nigerian universities after six months of intensifying conflicts across the country. During that period, hundreds of university professors were fired, imprisoned, and ejected from their government residences partly because of their alleged sympathy with students. Between 1985 and 1993, more than 100 Nigerian students were killed by riot police using live ammunition on unarmed protesters during several student confrontations with law enforcement agents. During that period, about 1,000 students were imprisoned under harsh conditions; hundreds of students were suspended and expelled without fair hearing.<sup>6</sup>

The seed of vices was systematically sown in our schools. For example Ebenezer Obadare avows “that indeed, the menace of cultism which has plagued the Universities from the mid-1980s has been blamed, in part, on the militarisation of the Nigerian public sphere”<sup>7</sup> Government in democratic setting also knows how to suppress and muzzle the educational system through the same strategy adopted by the military junta, thereby helping our educational system to become a fledging and fertile soil for all manner of moral misdemeanours. Obadare, quoting Onyeonoru, says that 'the almost two decades of economic, political and moral crises witnessed in Nigeria from the 1980s produced a

social environment typified by anomie, and this had significant impact on social order and normative behavior in Nigerian tertiary institutions<sup>8</sup>

The moral and value problems in Nigerian educational system have ever since continued to multiply and thereby become a source of worry by scholars and other stakeholders. The loss of value both in our educational system and the society at large has made the goals of education unachievable. P.O.Tella, A. Okanlawon & P.O. Ossai were alarmed by the parlous state of moral decadence in our society when they asserted that "...it is now a general belief in Nigeria today and held by all sensitive citizens of this country that we are at a cross road, in dilemma as far as...morality is concerned. We should in fact recognize that there is moral "nightmare" in our country at the moment, about which we must all find means to do something positive"<sup>9</sup>. In the same vein, Pai Obanya also lamented that Nigerian society has witnessed a radical shift in its value systems. The role model is no longer the *omoluabi* (a well-brought-up person), but the *omo jagidi jagan* (the person who simply tramples on the rights of others)<sup>10</sup> In other words, learning for service to the enduring values of society has been replaced by learning for narrow personal interests and material empowerment. Obanya further noted the negative situation in Nigerian educational system thus:

Political instability and poor economic performance have produced the malignant phenomena of 'education for frustration', with a reigning mood of 'after schooling, what next?' The prevailing conditions in the education system therefore raise the following questions: Does Nigeria have clear societal development goals to which the goals of education can derive their inspiration? How best can Nigeria, through its education system, ensure that it correctly invests in the next generation?<sup>11</sup>

Many in Nigeria today are aware that we are living in an era of moral decline. Not only are our streets unsafe due to violence, criminality etc, but holders of public office are charged with serious breaches of ethics and public trust, young people engage in acts that display high level of moral bankruptcy. The breakdown of value system and the substitution of individualistic lifestyle for community living have negatively impacted on the Nigerian educational system. This loss of community is what R.D. Putnam dubbed "this precious and diminishing commodity *social capital*"<sup>12</sup> These and some other factors have made the educational system in Nigeria not only weak but also dangerous. Nigeria is a victim of the collapse of values, the politicians who steal public

funds and live ostentatiously; the administrators who steal the funds meant for the education sector, the religious leaders who preach the message of miracles and prosperity and parents who are willing to help their children cheat in public examinations. We are in a society where majority of people no longer respect merit and hard work; but easy access and admiration to unaccounted wealth and culture of lawlessness. This can be seen in the rampant examination malpractices, inadequate funding and other negative acts.

However, it is important to emphasise that there is a mutual intercourse between society and education. While the society creates and influences education, educational system perpetuates and regenerates the society. Hence, education remains the means to correct societal ills and its own failings. In this case, the general loss of positive values in our society is a product of the failings of our educational system and vice-versa. The problem of corruption and dishonesty in our public life are perpetrated majorly by the educated ones. As J.C. Aggarwal rightly puts it, "it is the students of today who are to be in charge of the various departments of life tomorrow."<sup>13</sup>

Elliot Eisner laments this vacuum of moral discourse in schools. He argues that our society is daily pressed by several moral problems but unfortunately the school is failing in addressing this fundamental responsibility. He opines that while few knowledgeable people would deny that problems of value underlie much of the difficulty mankind now faces, those same individuals would be hard pressed to find schools offering systematic programs dealing with questions of value, let alone with the idea of mankind. At best, discussion of value is brought in *ad hoc* in the social studies or religious knowledge program or is treated descriptively as merely another aspect of social science. According to Elliot, moral values was in the past within the precinct of religion but with the separation of church and state and with the growth of industrialization in the last half of the nineteenth century and immigration around the turn of this century, secularization increased and the schools took on different roles. Preparation for vocational skills, acculturation of the foreign born, and concern with the development of worthy leisure-time activities became important concerns of the school. With the growth of technology, experimental psychology, and other practices and movements committed to science, the schools moved more and more toward the separation of fact and value in education. This gap has grown so wide that it is not rare to hear educators and parents alike saying, "The schools should concern themselves with

helping the student acquire knowledge; the home will take care of his morals."<sup>14</sup> According to Elliot, this position is not tenable. The school, for better or worse, is an ethically committed institution. It cannot be morally neutral. For example, the selection of significant subject matter, the selection of appropriate modes of instruction, the determination of good educational objectives, the identification and reward of outstanding teachers all rest on some value base. The situation that must be faced according to Elliot is whether these values will continue to be implicit and covert or whether they will be objects of intelligent deliberation by both students and teachers alike.<sup>15</sup> It is also significant to note that, while mankind is confronted with the most explosive situation it has ever faced, the schools avoid, by commission or by omission, discussion of the values issues that have made these problems so great.

In Martin Buber's conception of morality and moral education, mystery dominates and certainty is balanced by uncertainty. Buber's portrayal of morality, its nature and how it "takes hold" of a person (i.e., how one is morally educated) is premised on his notion of responsibility. Buber's notion of responsibility has four essential features. Firstly, the decision to respond this way or that to this or that other comes from deep within. That is, there is full consciousness that the decision does not merely reflect what is popular, or unpopular, but that it is genuinely, deeply, my own decision; it does not strike me as arbitrary or careless but rather is a response of my "whole being". Secondly, the decision to respond genuinely, deeply, is born of the sort of experience referred to by Buber as dialogue or communion, wherein I have a heightened awareness of the other that is in some sense lyrical, moving and meaningful. In being open to the world, as opposed to using it, I am addressed by it. I experience "that spark of the soul". The kindling of the response in that "spark" of the soul, the blazing up of the response, which occurs time and again to the unexpectedly approaching speech, we term responsibility.<sup>16</sup> Thirdly, in making my response, I am dominated by a sense of having been entrusted with the other. The other must receive from me an honest, genuine response since the other is "in my care". I cannot let the other down; I could not harm the other. I cannot be answerable without being at the same time answerable for the other as one who is entrusted to me. But thereby a man has decisively entered into relation with otherness; and the basic structure of otherness, in many ways uncanny but never quite unholy or incapable of being hallowed, in which I and the others who meet me in my life are interwoven, is the body politic.<sup>17</sup> Fourthly, my deep, genuine response to that other with whom am entrusted is the response of doing what is right and what is good.

Faced, for example, with the reality of Billy in the classroom, and having been open to him, and fleetingly, but dramatically, felt his presence, I have to do the right thing. What I do is what I believe, to the very best of my knowledge and intuition, to be right. I am not able to know intellectually that I am right, but I know I am right. The rightness of my response is, for me, "uncertain certainty". In Buber's words,

I point to the unknown conscience in the ground of being, which needs to be discovered ever anew, the conscience of the "spark", for the genuine spark is effective also in the single composure of each genuine decision. The certainty produced by this conscience is of course only a personal certainty; it is uncertain certainty.<sup>18</sup>

He continues thus,

You cannot devour the truth, it is not served up anywhere in the world; you cannot even gape at it, for it is not an object. And yet there does exist a participation in the being of inaccessible truth – for the man who stands its test. There exists a real relation of the whole human person to the unpossessed, unpossessable truth, and it is completed only in standing its test.<sup>19</sup>

Thus, in encountering the world in the lyrical, disturbing manner of dialogue, Buber insists that one encounters an unpossessable truth, the eternal values. According to him, one experiences these eternal values as opposed to learning them; I "sense" them. I cannot doubt them for they are truth. But intellectually I must doubt the whole experience; intellectually I am certain of nothing: I cannot prove or provide clear evidence for what I have "learned". Morality, then, for Buber, is not an upshot of intellectual training or capability or an act of faith, but of openness to the world where within the spark of dialogue moral truths are "felt". The life of dialogue is no privilege of intellectual activity like dialectic. It does not begin in the upper story of humanity. It begins no higher than where humanity begins. There are no gifted and ungifted here, but only those who give themselves and those who withhold themselves. And he who gives himself tomorrow is not noted today, even he himself does not know that he has it within himself, that we have it within ourselves, he will just find it, "and finding be amazed"<sup>20</sup> Emerging from strange, lyrical, amazing, fleeting relations with the other, person or thing, morality intermittently flashes on to the world scene in concrete, particular experiences. Morality is not an opinion or social convention. Morality is an unpossessable truth which eludes man's attempt to freeze it into language as a stable,



analysable, possessed moral principle; morality eludes reason. Values and mystery are inseparable.

In his book, *Difficulties in Christian Belief*, Alasdair McIntyre states the traditional argument for logical autonomy of morality from religion as follows: If someone asserts that we ought to do what God commands, we can only reply that this can be so only if what God commands is always right. But we can only know that what God commands is always right, if we possess some independent standard of right and wrong by means of which we can judge the rightness or otherwise of the divine commandments. But if we do possess such a standard, then we can judge of the rightness or wrongness of any given course of action without any reference whatsoever to what God commands. That God commands a certain course of action cannot therefore of itself tell us whether that course of action is right; and in knowing whether it is right the knowledge that God commands it is superfluous and irrelevant.<sup>21</sup> In this wise, it becomes difficult to insist that religion should dictate the basis for moral education.

Also, Paul Hirst in his submission on the subject matter argues that those who push the thesis that moral questions are in fact inseparable from religious questions are mistaken. The thesis which argues that in the last analysis-if one really gets down to the business-moral values rest on religious beliefs for without this foundation there really are no reasons why one should be just, tell the truth, respect other people's property, and so on. In its strongest form this view maintains that for something to be right, is for it to be the command or will of God. 'Right' is 'doing the will or command of God' and thus our knowledge of what is right comes from our knowing what God wills or commands. Without this knowledge of God's will, men can only live according to their personal likes or dislikes for without this foundation moral principles just do not stand up. It is one thing to maintain that whatever is right is also the will of God, it is quite another to maintain, that for something to be right is just for it to be the will or command of God. On the first view man may have a knowledge of right of a purely natural kind and in addition believe that what he thus knows to be right is also according to God's will. On the other view being right and being the will of God are equated in meaning so that it can be consistently maintained that man only knows what is right because he can know what God wills. Moral terms like ought, right, good are here being so logically tied to religious terms that moral judgments have become essentially judgments of a religious kind, judgments as to the will of God. Because of the equation of meaning it is argued

that man's moral knowledge rests entirely on what God reveals as His will in Scripture, the church or by His indwelling Spirit. This strong thesis really consists of two claims.

First, to say something is right, good and ought to be done, means that it is willed by God. Secondly that we only know what is right or good by coming to know what God wills. It may, however, be said that few Christians go as far as to make the first claim on the equation of meaning though more are prepared to accept the second claim as to the source and basis of moral knowledge. To hold simply to the second claim only and not to both is to subscribe to a somewhat weaker thesis. Nevertheless both positions firmly root moral knowledge in religious knowledge. The strong one ties a logical knot making moral knowledge necessarily dependent on religious knowledge. The weaker one while allowing that other bases for moral knowledge are conceivable, denies that as a matter of fact we have any other. According to Hirst, both theses have an appeal for religious believers but there are at least three different forms of argument why they must both be rejected. First, the second claim which is common to both strong and weak theses, that man only knows right from wrong by discovering God's will, is surely quite contrary to the empirical facts.<sup>22</sup>

This is plain, unless one is so totally puzzled by certain extreme forms of Biblical interpretation that one cannot see the evidence before one's very eyes, that men do know that lying, promiscuous sex-relations, and war are wrong quite independently of Christian revelation. The terms right and wrong, good and bad have meaning as ordinary everyday terms in human discourse. They are terms used for judgments for which men have perfectly good reasons which have nothing to do with religious beliefs. It is just false to say that there are no reasons for something being good or for my being good, other than that God has willed or revealed this. Certainly it is false to suggest, as Christian religionists hold to an exclusive view of revelation must suggest, that outside the Judaeo-Christian tradition men have no genuine moral knowledge because they lack the revelation of God's will and by extension, moral education can only be erected on Christian religious studies. The question however remains, how is it then that one can find the highest moral understanding in other traditions? All forms of knowledge are known in varying degrees within different traditions. In particular what of the moral understanding of Socrates and Aristotle based on the straight use of reason and observation? Can one honestly maintain that these people had no justifiable moral knowledge?

The above position informs the premise upon which some scholars and many people in their commentaries on moral vices in our schools appeal to. Some scholars, like I.S. Aderibigbe, in their contribution to the discourse of moral vices in school, lament that the teaching of religion has lost its pride of place in the Nigeria educational system as a base for moral education. Aderibigbe claims that this neglect has resulted into pushing religion into the background in the education of children. He avers that the attendant problem of this neglect has denied the school system and the society of certain values. In his words, "There were times in the past when religious instruction had the pride of place in the educational system of the land."<sup>23</sup> He reminisces the positive impact religious instruction by the missionaries brought to Nigeria. Aderibigbe also quotes J.A. Akinpelu as claiming that one of the aims of religious education is the promotion of religious and moral awareness and growth of the child.<sup>24</sup> The import of Aderibigbe's position is that religious education is a virile means of engendering moral virtues in the child. In a similar vein, Kehinde Ayantayo avers that religious education has a fundamental role in promoting morality in pupils. He sees religious ethics as a means of enhancing man-man relationship. In his words, "It is important to state that the two inform man-man relationship, on the one hand, and God-man relationship on the other hand. Religious beliefs particularly inform many religious practices of social and moral import..."<sup>25</sup> The point he is driving at is the essence of religious knowledge in moral development of children in school. One important similarity between the above mentioned scholars is their recognition of traditional religion as an important religion to be included in the religious knowledge class which in their opinion can both facilitate students understanding of religious beliefs and improve their morals.

This again draws us to the discourse engendered by the likes of John Mbiti and Bolaji Idowu as to the pervasive religious outlook of Africans. Bolaji Idowu and John Mbiti, are renowned African scholars who projected Africans as profoundly religious. According to Mbiti,

...traditional religions permeate all departments of life, there is no formal distinction between the sacred and the secular, between the religious and the non-religious, between the spiritual and the material areas of life. Wherever the African is, there is his religion: he carries it to the fields where he is sowing seeds or harvesting a new crop; he takes it with him to the beer party or to attend a funeral ceremony; and if he is educated, he takes religion

with him to the examination room at school or in the university; if he is a politician he takes it to the house of parliament.<sup>26</sup>

Mbiti is saying that Africans are unrepentantly religious. Mbiti's position of course is a direct reaction to the comments of scholars like Samuel Baker, James Frazer, Edward Tylor just to mention but a few. These scholars painted Africans as fetish, morally crude and without any sense of religiosity. Olusegun Oladipo in his article, "Religion in African culture" avers that early European travellers and missionaries in Africa reported Africans as lacking those religious and moral beliefs and attitudes that define a genuine human civilization. This according to Oladipo is summarised by Samuel Baker's characterization of this lack of religious and moral refinement among Africans:

Without exception, they are without a belief in a Supreme Being, neither have they any form of worship or idolatry; nor is the darkness of their minds enlightened even by a ray of superstition. The mind is as stagnant as the morass which forms its puny world.<sup>27</sup>

The above was what the likes of Mbiti were trying to deny but unfortunately went to the extreme in the process. Oladipo and John A. Bewaji and Kwasi Wiredu moderated the thoughts of Mbiti on religion and morality. For example, Oladipo commenting on Wiredu and Idowu's response to Mbiti's assertion thus:

It should be noted, however, that although the belief in a Supreme Being is widespread in African culture, the people do not worship Him, as the Christians, for example, do their God. Rather, they relate more directly to the divinities or deities. These divinities are believed to be more accessible, and it is to them that the people take their immediate problems... However, it is doubtful that these divinities can appropriately be regarded as religious objects to which the people have a religious attitude. This judgment is based on the following considerations... most of these divinities are man-made in the sense that they are originated and maintained by human beings.<sup>28</sup>

Oladipo thereafter asserts that the source of ethics and morality in African culture is distinct from religion. According to him, African cultures extol the virtues of community and that moral obligations are primarily social rather than individual, and that communal factors often take precedence over individual rights or interests. The impression that morality is predicated on a religious foundation is meant as derogatory

commentaries on the moral universe in which Africans live. This supposition that religion serves as foundation of morality is therefore based on an improper understanding of the principles that fashion the moral and social fabric of African societies. In African moral sphere, the individual is responsible to himself, family and the society. The society is equally responsible for the well-being of all members of the society. In Oladipo's words:

It may seem that morality is a personal thing, first and foremost. This is only partially true, from the African perspective. The artificial separation of individual moral responsibility from that of society is the result of superficial thinking. It is obvious that the context in which moral obligations arise is an interactive one. It is the social milieu in which competition for the scarce resources of the environment takes place. But it is not only the resources of the environment that are scarce. The human resources of love, patronage, recognition, compassion, companionship, etc. are also scarce, and require deliberate efforts in both their generation and equitable distribution. Here lies the crux of the moral responsibility of society to its members and to itself. And this fact is represented in numerous ideas in African moral thought.<sup>29</sup>

What Oladipo is saying is that African moral world is one that synergises the individual and community in a social atmosphere. The two reinforces each other to promote their well-being. To further corroborate the synergy that exists between the community and individuals, Oladipo cites Gbadegesin thus:

From this it follows that there need not be any tension between individuality and community since it is possible for an individual to freely give up his/her own perceived interest for the survival of the community. But in giving up one's interests thus, one is also sure that the community will not disown one and that one's well being will be its concern. . . . The idea of individual rights, based on a conception of individuals as atoms, is therefore bound to be foreign to this system. For community is founded on notions of an intrinsic and enduring relationship among its members.<sup>30</sup>

In a related manner, Omotade Adegbindin affirms the position of scholars who deny morality as a subset of religion in Africa. He avers that religion is not a competing foundation theory of morals in African societies. Using the traditional Yoruba society as an example, Adegbindin argues that the Yoruba are people whose approach to morality is essentially dynamic since there are many deities each having his or her moral

formulations for his or her devotees to follow. This implies that the Yoruba people like other tribes in Africa serve different deities and if this is the case, then it becomes difficult to tell how they will organise their social life from a moral perspective if we deny them an independent source of morality.<sup>31</sup> Ethics in African societies has a social base such that relationships are rationally premised and religious acrimony was non-existent.

Jim Unah, in his observation of the decadence ravaging the young and old in Nigerian society lamented infiltration of negative western lifestyles, the pretense and delusion of the Western and Eastern religions in Nigeria. He scorned the call of these two religions in regard to their claims that they alone could inject moral fibre into their adherents. The religions hitherto continuously pride themselves as the custodians of moral values and virtues of society. This claim unfortunately, is taken by many as nothing but the truth. Unah argues that these religionists err because there is a clear demarcation between ethics/moral philosophy and religion. He advocates for teaching of ethics in schools as a way to shape character in ways that would be beneficial to both the individual and society. The call for ethics in schools according to Unah is one that is overdue.<sup>32</sup>

Ebun Oduwole in this vein argues that morality in Yoruba thought is virtue based. She avers that though there is no definite word for virtue in Yoruba vocabulary, scholars like Samuel Johnson, J.A. Sofola have been able to give us a list or idea of what virtue is. For example she cited Sofola as listing 'wholesome human relations', 'respect for elders', 'communal fellow-feeling', 'a live-and-let-live' philosophy, 'altruism' (including medical and economic variants of it) and 'hospitality'.<sup>33</sup> The point being made here is that morality in Africa, particularly in Yoruba society is virtue oriented and socially based. Virtues in Yoruba society has to do with moral and character traits in person. It focuses on acceptable qualities in individuals that are crucial to building and developing the society. Virtue for the Africans is the attainment of any good quality or character trait and the avoidance of bad habits or immoral conduct. According to Oduwole, virtues are to be learnt and cultivated. In this sense, there is a conscious effort on the part of the adult world to inculcate those virtues on young ones at home and in the farm. Parents use analogies, stories, proverbs to drive home the import of any particular virtue to be inculcated. Virtue ethics in Yoruba society abhors vices and the home and community generally endeavour to discourage vices such as covenant breaking,

falsehood, murder, selfishness, wickedness. In short, a good person has a good character, and a good character is made up of the excellences of virtues. One can say further that virtue for the Yoruba is a multi-track disposition. The Yoruba do not judge one's moral character as good or bad based on one single observed action alone but on series of similar actions which result in qualification of whether one is an 'omoluwabi' or not. An 'omoluwabi' to the Yoruba is an ideal person. That is a person with good character is labelled as an ideal person.<sup>34</sup>

Relatedly, J.A. Akinpelu opines that while religious sanctions are invoked in serious moral situations, or as a last resort, secular sanctions are most frequently used in the vast majority of moral conflicts. According to him, a most effective negative sanction for morality among the Africans is the public opinion or the public disapproval. Citing Godfrey Wilson, Akinpelu mentions that the Nyakyusa of East Africa call it "the breath of men"; the Yorubas of West Africa call it *enu omo ara aye* (lit.) "the mouth of people".<sup>35</sup> Scholars have variously confirmed the importance of secular sanctions in African morality. Akinpelu citing Wilson wrote,

Among the Nyakyusa, the ideas of social behaviour are not generally connected with religion...; generosity, hospitality, peaceableness, courtesy, affability, loyalty to friends, respect to seniors, care of the old, the sick, the crippled, the half-wits and idiots- all these I have heard praised, and the man who possesses these virtues is an object of social esteem. But their practice is not believed to carry with it any supernaturally given rewards beyond the general one of the absence of supernatural punishment."<sup>36</sup>

From the foregoing, a close analysis of the religion proposal as solution to moral decadence shares at least two prominent features. The first is the erroneous belief that Africans are "profoundly religious"<sup>37</sup> and second, relegation of the social imperative and dynamism of morality in African society. This thesis takes the view that religion proposal leaves so many questions unanswered: which of the religious moral code is to be adopted by the educational system as basis for moral education? How do we resolve the divisive foundational beliefs of various religious groups? How do we accommodate the atheists? How do we escape contravening the provision of the Nigerian constitution of promoting a secular state?

However, few works in African moral education viz J.A. Akinpelu, Otonti Nduka, Remi Bamisaiye and E.O. Iheoma succeeded in criticizing the products of such religious education but failed in providing clear approach to moral education. This work in the alternative argues that man by nature is oriented to moral action by the process of education without flying into the supra sensible. In this wise, this research work anchors viable moral education programme on Aristotle's virtue theory which provides philosophical psychology basis for moral development in man. We insist that aside the fact that many atrocities have been committed in the name of religion by cynical manipulators who have used religion for their own ends or more tragically, by believers, carried away by fervent idealism or motivated by the hope of reward or fear of eternal punishment, the fact that there is a variety of religions in Nigeria will make it difficult to decide which one to adopt. In this regard, we posit that moral education programme aimed at mitigating moral degeneracy is best located in philosophical discourse and not religion. Moral education is equally situated in the domain of rational discourse where beliefs can be subjected to critical analysis. Also the critical discussion of actions, characters and modes of justification are a crucial part of moral education and these are forbidden in most religions of the world.

Also, Amaechi Udefi discusses the level of indiscipline, sexual abuse, cultism and a host of other vices in Nigerian tertiary institution. He mentioned that government's attempt at addressing this problem has failed woefully. One of the factors identified as responsible for this failure is the inability of government to articulate an effective philosophy of education especially in the area of moral education. The government through the National Policy has consistently over the years lumped moral education with religious studies. In his words,

in practical terms, there is no mechanism that is instituted for the teaching of moral education at all levels of Nigerian education system. Rather, what one finds is an emphasis on religious instruction, which is made an optional or elective at the primary and secondary levels. For, the curriculum of moral education ought not be confused with that of religious knowledge. Whereas the former emphasises the critical and rational analysis of issues, the latter teaches dogma through the means of indoctrination.<sup>38</sup>

The point being made by Udefi is that the focus of moral education is clearly different from that of religious instruction. While religious instruction attempts to pass



on religious dogma, moral education critically and rationally makes positive values inviting to students. Unfortunately, the avenue to address issue of value which can improve the level of moral probity among the students was thrown to the wind. The resolution of this gap is the focus of this research. To this effect, the National Policy on Education should revisit aspect of moral education that is philosophically based, gender and religiously neutral and culturally relevant as against the present concentration on religious education, which is dogmatic.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Nigerian National Policy on Education is a fundamental document and instrument that government uses in realizing that part of the national goals through education as a tool. In this regard, one of the fundamental goals of government that is derived from the Nigeria's philosophy of education is the inculcation of "values which assist to raise morally upright individuals capable of independent thinking"<sup>39</sup>. In addition to this, the Policy expected education to promote both "rational...physical, emotional and psychological development of all children"<sup>40</sup> such that there is a shared responsibility for the common good of society. That is, the educational system is expected to provide a universal platform through which all pupils can collectively acquire these moral values sanctioned by reason. The other equally important value enunciated by the Policy document has to do with the inculcation of "spiritual values or principles"<sup>41</sup> However, these religious values are ideally expected to be acquired on the basis of individual pupil's belief but this is lumped in the Policy with moral values thus: "inculcating moral and spiritual principles in interpersonal and human relation"<sup>42</sup> Unfortunately, this related but distinct aspect of values has been substituted for moral education as Francis Arinze as cited by Mary Iwenofu argued that "Moral education not based on dogma and supported by ritual soon proves abortive"<sup>43</sup> However Gabriel Moran rebuffs this position when he argues that:

...religious education and moral education should be distinct... this principle can be accepted by both the devout Christian and the secular ethicist. In the world that has been shaped by western enlightenment, an educational approach to morality cannot begin with religious premises.<sup>44</sup>

The sensitive nature of diverse religious beliefs and its high level of intolerance within Nigerian society despite some of its inherent values informs what Akinpelu observes thus:

Intolerance is inherent in Orthodox religious beliefs - there must be the goats and the sheep, those destined for hell and those bound for heaven, the saved and the lost souls, etc. Now, we have already enough of intolerance in the intellectual, social, political and economic life of this country to add an intensified and frenzied religious fanaticism.<sup>45</sup>

By implication, values of these religions are to a reasonable extent positive but often contradict one another. As such could not serve as the universal platform to achieve common understanding of moral values. While it is of a fact that most religions have values in awakening the spiritual consciousness of people, its primary focus of doctrinal purity, the divisive nature and tendencies that always attend religion remains an obstacle to making it the basis of moral education in Nigerian educational system. In addition, religion has to do with individual beliefs which oftentimes contradict beliefs of others. Hence, there is a need for a moral education independent of religion that is undergirded by a moral theory with an intent to achieving the goals of education in a secular nation like Nigeria whereby education “inculcates values and raise morally upright individual”<sup>46</sup> To this end, our thesis meets the expectation and intention of the Nigerian Philosophy of Education in its assertion that education assists in the “development of the individual into a morally sound, patriotic and effective citizen”<sup>47</sup>

### **Research Questions**

From the foregoing exposition, five questions are raised here:

- i. To what extent has moral decadence negatively affected Nigerian educational system and the society?
- ii. Is religion the foundation of morality in African society?
- iii. Can religion provide the universal platform to address problems of moral values?
- iv. Can Aristotle’s moral theory of virtue be adapted to African moral/cultural realities?
- v. To what extent can the elements of African traditional education be grafted into Nigeria Educational System?

## Statement of the Thesis

The teaching of moral education is, apart from being urgently needed, in schools requires a moral theory that emphasizes deliberation on what is morally important to the recipients or beneficiaries with a view to developing particular traits of character and conduct which are the moral virtues. The adoption of Aristotle's Virtue Theory is deliberate because it focuses on practical character and conduct of individuals as against traditional ethics that emphasize principles. More importantly, religious knowledge or instruction need not be confused with moral education, as it is presently. In this way, moral education becomes the rallying point or platform for all students from diverse religious background to assess what it means to becoming a person of moral worth. Hence, this thesis proposes one such alternative, by defending the position that moral education requires moral theory which factors in man's emotional, rational and cultural elements. Accordingly, we will propose a moral theory which recognizes that to achieve moral excellence requires a fusion of intellect and character in moral education pedagogy. Examination of the process of education reveals that there is a significant interplay between development of character and intellect and that the elements of the educational program will influence both of these parts of the soul within a cultural milieu. Aristotle's theory of moral development becomes handy in this regard. It will however be expedient at this point to quickly do a clarification between morality and ethics. This is important because it will put our discourse in perspective. Historically, the term 'ethics' is etymologically derived from the Greek word *ethos* which means the customs, habits and mores of people. Also, 'Morality' is derived from Latin words *mos, moris* which denotes basically the same; it was introduced by Cicero as an equivalent to the Greek *ethos*. But in contemporary definition, morality means the customs, the special do-s and don't-s that are shared and widely accepted as standard in a society or community of people — accepted as a basis of life that doesn't have to be rationally questioned. On the other hand, ethics can be described as the philosophical reflection upon these rules and ways of living together, the customs and habits of individuals, groups or mankind as such.<sup>48</sup>

This comes close to the conception of Aristotle. In ancient Greek philosophy the question was to find how to act well and rightly and what personal/individual qualities are necessary to be able to do this. Ethics therefore encompasses the whole range of human action including personal preconditions. This is still true today, but for e.g.

Aristotle ethics focused mainly on the pursuit of the ‘good (life)’, the eudaimonia. The aim was to identify and to practically realise ‘the (highest) good’ in life — which means that you have to evaluate what is ‘good’ as regards content: what life is a good life and what is not? Virtue ethics is one of the theories of normative ethics. Normative ethics is the study of what makes an action morally right or wrong. There are several other theories of normative ethics. Deontology teaches that the morality of actions depends on if those actions obey established rules or laws. Consequentialism takes into account the end result of the action and says an act can only be moral if the real or intended result of the act is good. In Pragmatism, cultural influences must be taken into account as well as the latest in scientific discovery. Virtue ethics bills itself as a separate and older theory—originating in Aristotle—but careful consideration will show it embodies the basics of all of the other three theories.

In virtue ethics, the morality of actions is based on the character of the person; a virtuous person will naturally act ethically. It is not enough to do an act that benefits another or to act with altruistic purposes. The act must come from a good and virtuous character. And a good and righteous character comes from the deliberate practice of three core virtues viz: *Arete*, *Phronesis* and *Eudaimonia*. In essence, virtue theory is a combination of ethics of character and ethics of conduct. That is, the proper focus of ethics should be on people’s characters rather than on their actions. Also, the theory emphasizes that the best way to know what one should do is to think of how to behave virtuously, rather than thinking of how to follow a moral principle. By ethics of character, we mean deliberation on what is morally important is to be a particular kind of person, and to have developed the particular traits of character which are the moral virtues. According to Gerard Hughes, moral philosophy, in the estimation of virtue ethicists, might have been too long preoccupied with ‘issues’ and moral dilemmas. But the moral life is quite distorted if it is seen principally as problem solving or trying to deal with agonizing cases. In fact, experientially, what we normally focus upon in our friends or our children, or, for that matter, in people such that we find it hard to deal with, is their characters, the kind of people they are. And if asked how we thought of our own moral lives, we might much more naturally say that we would hope to be loyal, honest, generous, rather than say that we would hope to keep a set of rules, however admirable they might be, or to solve all kinds of difficult moral dilemmas.<sup>49</sup> Also, ethics of conduct touches on not just a question of how we might naturally think of living a morally good life. It is an epistemological claim about how we can best discover what

living a good life requires of us. We discover what to do by thinking about generosity, or fidelity, or honesty or fairness rather than, say, by doing a utilitarian calculation, or applying a Kantian test. Underlying this epistemological fact, it might also be argued, that it is virtuous dispositions which give us the required moral perceptiveness, rather than some abstract set of principles to which we subscribe<sup>50</sup> For Aristotle, questions of morality are not simply how to conduct oneself in life; they involve how one becomes the kind of person readily disposed to conduct oneself; how one can be counted on to act and feel a certain way; how one comes to originate characteristic conduct and emotion from a fixed position.<sup>51</sup>

Hence, Aristotle's theory of virtue presupposes that humans naturally possess the material of excellence and naturally develop toward it, but that they do not achieve it without guidance. Moral excellence is a hexis of the affective part of the soul which enables a person reliably to choose and perform actions according to reason. It is manifested in action and concerns the experience of *pathe* which are intentional and cognitive. The person who is morally excellent consistently performs acts which fulfil his function, acting according to reason.' In order to attain moral excellence, a person must be able to choose well, which requires intellectual excellence and unity among desires. The excellent person achieves harmony of thought and desire, which enables him to act consistently for the sake of the noble. Aristotle emphasizes the crucial place of both reason and emotions in his moral theory. In a bid to do this, he distinguishes between moral and intellectual virtues, but he equally holds that no one is fully virtuous or has true moral virtue without having the intellectual virtue of practical wisdom, and he holds that no one can become practically wise without first possessing natural or habitual moral virtue. These interdependencies are grounded in the premise that human agents are a union of intellect and desire. These interdependencies between the intellectual and moral virtues are exceedingly important to Aristotle's theory of virtue and the human good, and our purpose here will be to explore their significance for moral education.

Aristotle distinguishes the moral and intellectual virtues but he also asserts the double-edged thesis that practical wisdom both presupposes and completes moral virtue. In taking this position, he follows Plato in rejecting the moral intellectualism of Socrates, while also preserving the doctrine of the unity of virtue. Virtue 'in the strict sense' involves practical wisdom, and this explains why:

some say that all the virtues are forms of practical wisdom, and why Socrates in one respect was on the right track while in another he went astray; in thinking that all the virtues were forms of practical wisdom he was wrong, but in saying they implied practical wisdom he was right...[I]t is...the state that implies the presence of right reason, that is virtue; and practical wisdom is right reason about such matters. Socrates, then, thought the virtues were forms of reason (for he thought they were, all of them, forms of knowledge), while we think they involve reason. It is clear, then...that it is not possible to be good in the strict sense without practical wisdom, nor practically wise without moral virtue. But in this way we may also refute the dialectical argument whereby it might be contended that the virtues exist in separation from each other; the same man, it might be said, is not best equipped by nature for all the virtues, so that he will have already acquired one when he has not yet acquired another. This is possible in respect of the natural virtues, but not in respect of those in respect of which a man is called without qualification good; for with the presence of the one quality, practical wisdom, will be given all the virtues.<sup>52</sup>

Practical wisdom entails the presence of all the virtues because although one may have some natural or habituated virtues in some degree without having them all, if one lacks the perceptions associated with even one form of virtue, then one's perception of moral particulars, conception of the proper ends of action, and deliberations about what to do will all be corrupted in at least that one respect. There will be situations in which the emotions associated with the missing form of virtue will be felt too strongly or weakly and will lead one astray.

Moral virtues thus come to be defined as dispositions to feel and be moved by our various desires or emotions neither too weakly nor too strongly, but in a way that moves us to choose and act as reason would dictate, and allows us to take pleasure in doing so. Intellectual virtues are later defined as capacities or powers of understanding, judgment, and reasoning which enable the rational parts of the soul to attain truth<sup>53</sup> the attainment of truth being the function of the calculative or practical part no less than the scientific or contemplative one.

Having drawn this distinction between the intellectual and moral virtues at the end of Book I, Aristotle opens Book II with a remark about the origins and development of

virtue, which contrasts these forms of virtue in a way that would seem quite significant for the enterprise of moral education:

Virtue, then, being of two kinds, intellectual and moral, intellectual virtue in the main owes both its birth and its growth to teaching... while moral virtue comes about as a result of habit, ...none of the moral virtues arises in us by nature.<sup>54</sup>

Aristotle introduces *phronesis* as an intellectual virtue (virtue of thought) that serves the moral virtues; for while the moral virtues make ‘the goal correct’, *phronesis* ‘makes what promotes the goal (correct)’<sup>55</sup> This intellectual virtue helps the moral virtues find their right ends and the suitable means to their ends. More specifically, *phronesis* ‘is a state grasping the truth, involving reason, concerned with action about what is good or bad for a human being’<sup>56</sup> We cannot be ‘fully good’ without *phronesis*, nor can we possess *phronesis* without virtue of character.<sup>57</sup> When a moral agent is stripped of the virtue of character, *phronesis* degenerates into a mere cunning capacity. Aristotle calls this ‘cleverness’. Cleverness involves the capacity to act or react in such a way as to ‘promote whatever goal is assumed and to achieve it’. If ‘the goal is fine, cleverness is praiseworthy, and if the goal is base, cleverness is unscrupulousness’; hence, both the *phronimoi* (persons exhibiting *phronesis*) and the unscrupulous can be called clever.<sup>58</sup>

We argue that given the complex nature of moral excellence which requires that the various parts of the soul be in good condition and the right relation to each other and to reason, moral education therefore involves nature, teaching and habit. It is the case that Aristotle does not present a systematic account of moral education. I attempted in this work to tease out from his comments from a variety of sources, primarily the two works on ethics: *Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Eudemian Ethics* and also from his other important works *Poetics*, the *Rhetoric*, and the *Politics*. We have been able to construct a fairly comprehensive account of Aristotle's views on moral education from these sources and relying on neo-Aristotelian philosophers and scholars like Alasdair McIntyre, Nancy Sherman, Burnyeat, M.F., Richard Sorabji, Gerard Verbeke and a host of other scholars. In constructing this thesis, we reconstructed Aristotle's theory of moral education and posited that moral education occurs in two stages: initial habituation and teaching which involves philosophical study of ethics. These correspond to the formal education discussed in the *Politics*, and which also correspond to the lessons contained in the

ethical works. The first stage of education, which shapes both character and intellect, exhibits a certain naturalness and relies on a positive starting point and a good social context. In guiding development, a moral educator is able to take advantage of a child's natural desire to attain pleasure and to avoid pain, his desire for honour and to avoid shame, his desire to understand, and his *philia* relations. A variety of types of instruction are employed during initial habituation, including musical training, play, imitation, tragedy and repetition of actions. These lessons work together to develop and shape emotions, as well as promote reasoning about action. At the end of this process, the student has a broad range of emotions which respond well to circumstances as well as an attachment to excellence. He begins to determine for himself what actions to perform and to identify with his abstract view of the end. He has also begun to assume responsibility for his own actions, but does not act consistently for the sake of the noble. In the final analyses, we argued that a student's moral education must be completed by philosophical study of ethics, as found in Aristotle's ethical works. This completes both character and intellectual training. Although the elements employed during formal education continue to have some influence over the student's development, they are not sufficient to bring him to full moral excellence. From his study of ethics and its philosophical justification of the good life, the student becomes motivated to strive to attain excellence. This motivation enables him to adopt an abstract perspective on action which posits the virtuous acts as the end of action. This, in turn, increases his ability to perform individual virtuous acts, unifies his desires, and helps to stabilize his character (*hexis*). The student attains moral autonomy and can decide for himself what actions are required. He is capable of legislation and no longer needs to rely on society's laws to determine what is just. His understanding of the nature of the best life (which is acquired through intellectual training) enables the student to consistently choose virtuous acts, to perform his function and to achieve moral excellence.

My approach to the study of Aristotle's theory of moral education, which places it in the context of his views on excellence and development has two distinct benefits. First, it reveals the importance of Aristotle's conception of human nature for moral education, in addition to the roles of intellect and training in the process. We will see how much Aristotle's account depends on his views about pleasure, honour and the rational capabilities and desires of humans. Without these presuppositions, Aristotle's theory would not be successful. The second result of my examination is that it lends



support to an interpretation of moral excellence according to which the non-rational and rational parts of the soul work together in action, with neither dominating the other. We see that during education, both reason and emotion are nurtured. Emotion is not pushed into the background or made submissive to reason, as an intellectualist interpretation might suggest. Rather, it is fostered by, and in turn fosters, moral development.

There are three major works of scholars that have greater relevance in buttressing Aristotle's theory of virtue and in practically realising the stages of moral development. One of the scholars is Alasdair MacIntyre. MacIntyre is a renowned Aristotelian whose work emphasises the social importance of virtues. For MacIntyre, the virtues then are to be understood as dispositions which sustain practices and enable individuals to achieve the internal goods of practices. The virtues will also sustain individuals in the appropriate kind of quest for the good as they overcome harms, dangers, and temptations which they encounter. The catalogue of the virtues will include such virtues as those needed to sustain the type of household and political communities in which men and women can strive for the good together. This leads to a conclusion about the good life for man. It is the life undertaken for the sake of seeking the good life for man and the required virtues are those necessary for us to understand more about the good life for man. Another important position of MacIntyre is that one should never seek the good or exercise the virtues for the sake of the individual because what it is to live the good life varies from setting to setting and person to person. The good is sought with reference to the particular role we each fill. We are someone's son or daughter, citizen of this or that city. What is good for us has to be good for anyone who inhabits such roles and the community at large. The past we inherit from our family, city and nation constitute the given facts of our lives and these things give our lives 'moral particularity.' We have an historical identity and a social identity. We are part of a history and the bearer of a tradition. In fact, practices have histories and it is subject to whatever mode by which it has been transmitted through many generations. Hence, virtues relate here because they sustain the relationship required for practices. According to MacIntyre,

“social action or community action is important in any practice and may require certain virtues like truthfulness, justice and courage for their execution without which practice cannot be sustained. MacIntyre seems to reject the view that practices are the same in all cultures. Rather, “it is for a community to select those

practices the execution of which will enable it to attain its goal or good”<sup>59</sup>

The point McIntyre is making here is that every community or society comes to cherish and uphold certain virtues that are cardinal to all their activities. The social identity of members has meaning within the purview of that practice. Furthermore, McIntyre gives a definition of virtue by saying that a virtue is an acquired human quality the possession and exercise of which tends to enable us to achieve those goods which are internal to practices and the lack of which effectively prevents us from achieving any such goods.<sup>60</sup> Here, Udefi avers that the picture that emerges in McIntyre’s discussion of virtue is the emphasis on training, practice, participation relationship and social institution.<sup>61</sup>

The second is the likes of Carol Gilligan and Nel Noddings whose works emphasise care as a key virtue. Care ethics emphasises emotion in moral relationships. Raja Halwani has consistently argued that care is an essential part of virtue. Infact, Halwani doubts the moral status of care ethics outside being incorporated in virtue ethics.<sup>62</sup> In this regard, the ethics of care is one important theory that can strengthen the stage of habituation because of its relational disposition. According to Nel Noddings relations between human beings are both ontologically and ethically basic.<sup>63</sup> In order to be moral, Noddings insists one must maintain one’s self as caring. She calls this view of oneself the "ethical ideal": "We want to be moral in order to remain in the caring relationship and to enhance the ideal of ourselves as one-caring [that is, as givers of care]. It is this ethical ideal ... that guides us as we strive to meet the other morally”<sup>64</sup> This ethical ideal comes from the two sentiments of natural and ethical caring. The former is the natural sympathy we feel for others; it is the sentiment expressed when we want and desire to attend to those we care for, such as a mother’s caring for her child. The latter occurs "in response to a remembrance of the first"<sup>65</sup> and it forms the basis of ethical obligation: it is the "I must" that we adhere to when we want to maintain our ethical ideal as one-caring. So even in situations when I find it difficult to engage in caring action, I am under an obligation to do so if I want to be moral, that is, to maintain myself as one-caring. What, however, is involved in caring relations? Noddings claims that for caring to be genuine it has to be for persons in definite relations with the one caring. Though she makes room for the idea that one can expand one’s circle of those cared-for (that is, those who are the recipients of care), she insists that genuine caring is

not caring for abstract ideas or causes. More specifically, genuine caring involves what Noddings calls "engrossment and motivational displacement"<sup>66</sup> In engrossment, the one-caring attends to the cared-for without judgment and evaluation, and she allows herself to be transformed by the other, while in motivational displacement the one-caring adopts the goals of the cared-for and helps the latter to promote them, directly or indirectly.

This account though has its limits but we shall however concentrate our attention on salient elements that we can incorporate into Aristotle's theory of virtue. We think of care as a virtue, as one virtue, albeit an important one, among those that go into constituting a flourishing life. As a virtue, care would not simply be a natural impulse, but to use Noddings's terminology, also ethical (in Aristotelian terms, it would not be a natural virtue, but one harnessed by reason). This position allows us to maintain what is most desirable about care ethics. First, consider care ethics' insistence on the idea that human beings are not abstract individuals who morally relate to each other following principles such as justice and non-violation of autonomy. One of virtue ethics main claims is that we are social animals who need to negotiate the ways we are to deal and live with each other.<sup>67</sup> With this general claim about our sociality, Virtue ethics also claims that without certain types of relationships we will not flourish. Without friends and family members, human beings will lead impoverished lives, being unable to partake in the pleasures of associating with people with whom they can trust and share their joys, sorrows, and activities. It is not just that intimate relationships are instrumental to flourishing, they are part and parcel of a flourishing life: intimate relationships "are not external conditions of [virtuous] activities, like money or power. Rather, they are the form virtuous activity takes when it is especially fine and praiseworthy."<sup>68</sup> Virtue ethics, then, gives pride of place to care ethics insistence on the sociality of human life and to its emphasis on the importance of certain types of relations such as those of friendship and family.

However, one might object that while care ethics takes human relationships to be ontologically basic, that is relationship is purely based on emotional attachment, Virtue ethics does not. Instead, it takes the individual as ontologically basic and the individual's flourishing as ethically basic. If so, then virtue ethics does not take caring for others as ethically basic. But then virtue ethics would not incorporate care ethics claims well and would not seriously accommodate its central claims. The objection raises a serious worry, but much depends on what we mean by "ethically basic" and on how we construe

the claims of virtue ethics. It is true that virtue ethics takes the concept of flourishing to be basic in important respects. First, virtue ethics is not narrowly act-centred as are some other theories, and in this respect, it takes seriously the issue of what a well-lived life is. Second, virtue ethics, claims that it is rational to be virtuous because being virtuous provides one's best chance to lead a flourishing life.<sup>69</sup> But from these claims, it does not follow that flourishing is ethically basic in the sense that it gives virtuous agents moral license to violate the claims of others, be these strangers or intimates, when the agent's flourishing is at stake. The virtues are constitutive of a flourishing life; we need to be virtuous if we are to flourish. But being virtuous is not a tactic an agent adopts when it so suits the agent. Having the virtues requires time, effort, and good upbringing. When one has the virtues, one has, among other things, the right values, thoughts, and emotions with respect to what is good and bad, right and wrong, worthwhile and not worthwhile. And this implies that being virtuous is compatible with, and often requires, sacrifices, sometimes of one's own self. One cannot, for example, claim to be courageous and then say that, even though this good is worth fighting for, one will not because one's life, and so one's flourishing, is at stake. With the above remarks in mind, and given the thesis that care should be thought of as a virtue, a virtuous, caring agent would act in a caring manner, and would feel the requisite emotions, when the situation calls for care. Hence in the process of habituation, care remains an essential ingredient at helping the children habituate into virtuous activities.

Another important element that is crucial in moral development of the young children as enunciated by Aristotle has to do with practical wisdom that is achieved by the moral agents on the basis of continuous moral reasoning. This route to achieving this capacity by moral agents can be attained by the incorporation of Jurgen Habermas idea of discourse in which norms are examined with the aim of reaching a communicative agreement. According to Habermas, discourse can guarantee insightful will-formation in which the interests of each individual are guaranteed without breaking the prior social bond which joins all those oriented towards reaching understanding. A discursively achieved agreement depends simultaneously on the non-substitutable 'yes' or 'no' positions of each individual and on the overcoming of the egocentric perspective required of all participants in an argumentative praxis.<sup>70</sup> In this exercise, discursive efforts attempts a rational reconstruction of the contents of a moral tradition that is devoid of religious foundations. The discourse principle tries to resolve a predicament in

which the members of any moral community find themselves when, in making the transition to a modern, pluralistic society, they face the dilemma that, while they still argue about moral judgments and beliefs with reasons, an encompassing value-consensus on basic moral norms has been shattered. They are entangled in action conflicts in need of regulation, and they still regard them as moral and hence as rationally resolvable conflicts, although their shared ethos has disintegrated. As the participants do not wish to resolve these conflicts through violence or even compromise, but through communication, their initial impulse is immediately to engage in deliberation and work out a shared ethical self-understanding. But under the differentiated social conditions of pluralistic societies they will soon realise that their strong evaluations lead to competing conceptions of the good. If the participants remain steadfast in their resolve to engage in deliberation and not abandon the moral regulation of their coexistence for a negotiated *modus vivendi*, they find that, in the absence of a substantive agreement on particular norms, they must rely on the 'neutral' circumstance that each of them participates in some communicative form of life—a form of life which is structured by linguistically mediated understanding. Since such communicative processes and forms of life have certain structural aspects in common, they might further ask whether these features contain normative contents that could form a basis for shared orientations.

Hence, the participants in the discourse find themselves constantly falling back on those common features they currently share as a result of having undertaken the cooperative endeavour of practical reasoning. The actual situation of performing a deliberative practice certainly affords an opportunity in view of the predicament posed by the pluralism of worldviews.<sup>71</sup> The prospect of an equivalent for the traditional substance of a received value consensus exists when the form of communication in which the joint deliberation takes place offers an aspect under which a justification of moral norms would be possible in virtue of its impartiality.

The implication and relevance of the above to our work lie in the opportunity for communicative social interaction which inducts the child into the social world—not only of moral actions, but also of moral discussion and argument—with the result that the child becomes progressively able to internalize the mechanisms of public dialogue as private thinking. The child, often assisted by explicit intervention from more capable reasoners, becomes increasingly capable of entering what Habermas calls practical discourse, in dialogue and in reflection. One distinctive idea of moral discourse is not to find universal

laws but a general law that will be agreed to be a universal norm. In this way it is possible to escape from mindless acceptance of given rules and from mindless relativism which suggests there are no moral norms at all. The only norms that can claim to be valid,' says Habermas, 'are those that meet (or could meet) with the approval of all affected in their capacity as participants in a practical discourse'.<sup>72</sup> In this wise, traditional African moral values can now form the basis of discourse to interrogate western values in our society such that we are not throwing away important values that promote humanity and advance interpersonal relationships that are cardinal to achieving a flourishing life.

According to virtue ethics, what is primary for ethics is not, as deontologists and utilitarians hold, the judgment of acts or their consequences based purely on rules and principles, but the judgment of agents. The good person is the fundamental category for moral philosophy, and the good person is the person of good character, the person who possesses moral virtue.<sup>73</sup> Infact, this moral virtue as will be exhibited by good person is only attainable within the society. Aristotle emphasizes this when he argues that "he who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god: he is no part of a state."<sup>74</sup> What Aristotle is knocking at here is essentially the social and cultural relevance to attaining moral virtue. An individual living a solitary life outside the society is not likely to bother about the kind of person he is in relation to others. Hence, cultural practice especially in terms of moral values is crucial element that informs the kind of person one is. The totality of man in terms of reason, dispositions and culture are blended together at arriving at a virtuous person in virtue ethics. In this wise, Aristotle is still widely held to be its finest exponent. This approach has a very close affinity with African world view. Also, the interpretive exposition and presentation of values generated by traditional African societies covers many aspects of the African cultural life. Although, it is important to note that talking about African cultural values does not imply that by any means there are no negative cultural disvalues or negative aspects of the African cultures. There are, of course many of it. This is because some cultural beliefs, practices and institutions that are regarded as cultural values may be regarded as cultural disvalues by others. Or even some aspects of what one regards as cultural values may require some refinement. Nevertheless, traditions need to be evaluated. The main reason for focusing on cultural values here is that some of these cultural values require appropriate and necessary amendment and refinement in order to be relevant to African modernity.<sup>75</sup>

So far, we started our discussion by clarifying the concept and essence of education. We analyzed and differentiated many concepts that revolve around the concept of education. We equally rejected the conception of education as purely instrumental in achieving either economic or technological goals of the society. Such conception is argued to be extremely narrow. In the final analysis, we separated the concept of education from religion and that education is the development of man's intellect in a non-dogmatic manner. Education does not entertain dogma in whatever form. Education, to sum up, is something which 'involves essentially processes which intentionally transmit what is valuable in an intelligible and voluntary manner and which create in the learner a desire to achieve it, this being seen to have its place along with other things in life. Drawing from chapter one, we examine the claims of scholars who are pushing for religious instruction as basis of moral education. Here, we established that morality is a derivative of reason and not a product of dogma or belief in a certain object of worship. We argued that moral education is essentially an education in morality and not in religious instruction. We contend that apart from the logical problem of non-confessional religious education, the problem of diverse religious codes with its attendant irreconcilable differences in beliefs amongst other practical and theoretical challenges pose a problem to effective inclusion of religious knowledge as a source of moral education in our educational curriculum. Hence, moral education cannot logically be premised on religious instruction. In chapter three, we beam our searchlight into the Nigerian educational system. Our literature reveals a deep seated moral deficit in our schools and by extension, our society. Various levels of our educational system is embroiled in one moral crisis or another. Both the administrators of education and the students are implicated in various dimensions of moral laxity. We concluded this chapter by identifying a lacuna in our curriculum-the absence of a well planned moral education orientation despite an explicit anticipation of it in the National Policy on Education. Also, we attempted to articulate a philosophically relevant theory of virtue upon which Nigerian moral education can be anchored. This theory is particularly championed by Aristotle; though reconstructed to suite our purpose.

One major setback in Aristotle's work is his thought that women were incapable of public responsibility, and that some humans were natural slaves, or that menial work was somehow dehumanizing. Scholars have disputed vigorously as to what Aristotle mean. Drawing their own interpretations on these ancient texts, scholars raise, and

attempt to explain, various questions regarding Aristotle's opinions on women. More specifically, these questions include women's role within marriage and the household, a woman's position as an active member of the city, and women's status as biologically equal or inferior, as a sex, to males. As we have showed in this work, the opinions of Aristotle that modern scholars hold oftentimes vary greatly and this is informed by a level of incoherence bedevilling Aristotle's view on women. Aristotle interprets his teachings with so many conflicting views. What does this say about Aristotle's place in philosophy? We examined the interpretations and positions of some scholars on Aristotle's view on women. And we argued that our speculation of Aristotle is going to fail if we do not understand it within the context of his time; the socio-political state of Athens.

According to Javier Martinez, there are lots of incoherence in Aristotle's work which oftentimes permit different interpretations of his work. In his words:

One is forced to proceed with the disagreeable task of reading and analyzing Aristotle's account of slavery because there is such divergence in the opinions of the expert scholars. If one takes a look at Aristotle's account of slavery, one will notice that on the one hand, Aristotle believes that slavery cannot be demonstrated as acceptable on the basis of weak arguments, but, on the other hand, he would indirectly advocate the enslavement of those who are not slaves by nature. Although scholars disagree about Aristotle's account of slavery, there is one point of consensus: his account is filled with incoherency and inconsistency.<sup>76</sup>

As Richard Mulgan points out, there are roughly three major camps on the issue of Aristotle's sexist views. The first consists of the commentators writing before 1970 such as E. Barker, W.L. Newman, and W.D. Ross. They did indeed question Aristotle's ethics regarding slavery, but when it came to women they tended to see Aristotle as a humane family man and thus were silent on criticism. The second camp is composed of scholars such as S.M. Okin and J.B. Elshtain. Noticing the patriarchal implications of Aristotle's texts, they denounce Aristotle as a sexist and blame him for his compliance and even advocacy of the lower status of women. Both of these groups share the same view of Aristotle's bias towards women; only later writers were more offended due to



the development of the feminist movement. H. L. Levy, from the third group of writers, believes Aristotle has quite the opposite intention and attempts to affirm Aristotle's status as a female sympathizer. Part of Levy's investigation cites text from Aristotle's *History of Animals*, which is ironic because this text is perhaps the most popular source of hypothetical evidence branding Aristotle a sexist. Levy's interpretation includes statements such as, "In *History of Animals*, Aristotle finds women to be superior in every intellectual characteristic worth noting. Women are more apt at rational learning, more considerate about the rearing of the young, and, more retentive in memory."<sup>77</sup><sup>69</sup> This quote summarizes Levy's claim that Aristotle was actually a champion for women's rights and a feminist. He also points to passages in *Nicomachean Ethics* concerning *phronesis*, or *prudence*, and deduces that, in his listing of women's chief virtues, Aristotle was hinting that women had a greater tendency for prudence than men.

Bradshaw shares this view on the importance of prudence in political leadership, and points to passages in *Politics* where she writes "Importantly, while Aristotle emphasizes prudence's application to practical, variable human activity, and sees its value as lying particularly in the running of political and household affairs, he nevertheless categorizes prudence as an intellectual virtue, indeed as one of the two highest intellectual virtues."<sup>78</sup> The virtue prudence is critical for a good ruler, and based on this assumption one might conclude that Aristotle used his rhetorical skill to blanket his true intentions, which were to covertly suggest that women should be recognized citizens and make political decisions, and even hold political power. This could not be openly stated as such because Athenian male citizens were naturally accustomed to their lofty positions as rulers and feared any change in social order, especially if their political influence was threatened.

Hence the analysis of Aristotle's views on women, and how those views have been debated by scholars, leads one to wonder how he developed his ethical beliefs, and how today's ethicists, working in a far more complex society, relate to his teachings. When it comes to ethics, we cannot so easily say that Aristotle was wrong. The importance of his teachings on this subject cannot be disputed because the ethical quandaries he presents within the texts are still relevant to our modern day. Science and technology have answered much more than Aristotle ever touched on in his endeavours, but technology cannot tell one how to live with virtue and lead a good life with others. Aristotle's ethical philosophy is certainly his strongest field of study and is most relevant

to us because his works on this subject, most scholars agree, accents the goodness of wisdom and rational living.

Another important issue in Aristotle's theory has to do with myriads of virtues to be developed in a virtuous person. The list is such a long one. One keeps wondering how this is achievable in moral education programme. To resolve this problem, we shall attempt a minimalist reconstruction of the values. Amelie Rorty, an advocate of Aristotelian virtue ethics, is equally worried with regard to our ability to encourage the development of all necessary virtues.

How can real virtue best be conveyed from one generation to another? The answer to this question must leave us with a bitter after taste. We can probably agree that we have a reasonably sound and clear idea of the minimal negative virtues: "Thou shall not kill, steal, harm your fellows." We probably agree also that these lessons are taught early and strongly by everyone and everything in a society, even when the advantages of violating them are visible all around us. Minimal negative virtue is most reliable when it has become second nature, when we wholeheartedly want to abide by its strictures, without further calculation and without the secondary reactive resentment that bides its time and secret place for counter attack. But minimal negative virtue produces no more than a reliable promise keeper' a well-tamed creature, certainly not yet someone who knows what promises are worth making. How can citizens become reasonably good neighbours, ready to do a good turn without calculation of gain, willing to take some risks to speak and act against what seems wrong, prepared to extend themselves for what seems good? How can we develop the habits of those whose friendship we shall cherish, on whose presence we shall rely people with an inventive moral imagination? How can we arrange matters so that their lives form a seamless whole, with their economic and professional activities, their friendships, their civic and domestic lives all moving them in the same direction? How can we so arrange matters that - without doing a breath of harm or injustice to either, without reducing either to the other - the activities and goods of public Life and those of private Life coincide?<sup>79</sup>

The search for solution led us to virtues of fairness, kindness, justice, non-malevolence and temperance as benchmark towards being virtuous. This reconstruction

is based on both the number of virtues acknowledged and in the worldview it represents. It is based on certain human psychological qualities, which dictate certain moral sentiments. As such, it recognizes human desire for personal freedom. Consequently, it requires only minimal restriction on human behaviour, only to the extent necessary to prevent him. The reconstruction of Aristotle's theory of virtue concentrates on the negative side of morality, the side that prohibits certain actions, without presenting any positive demands.

Pedagogically however, it might be argued that values may be hardly taught without some dose of indoctrination. Put in another way, can moral values be taught in the same sense that factual knowledge is taught? From the time of Socrates, answers have been sought to the question. Socrates, in assuming that moral virtues were latent in each individual, the teacher could bring these values into pupil's consciousness. Plato also, for example, in *Protagoras* and many of the dialogues conceded in the affirmative. He located the teachability of virtues in the matrix of nature and nurture. Plato had what must surely be essentially the right answer to the nature vs. nurture debate: our moral character is the result of the interplay between our innate nature and our circumstances, including, most importantly, our education. The question can however be pushed farther: will the pupil act on what has been learned? It is always taken that unless a pupil act on what was taught, it can hardly be said that he has learnt something. Following George Frederick Kneller, we want to argue that if by teaching we mean helping students become aware of it, then virtue can be taught. If by teaching and learning we mean simply imparting and acquiring knowledge of what morals are then values are teachable. Also teachers can test pupils to find out how much they know about moral values and can assist them in choosing between alternative courses of action. But the question of whether the teacher will guarantee that the pupil will act on what he has learned will be to ask for the impossible. The most a teacher can expect is that the student knows what is right and what is wrong, knows why it is so; and has some idea of what he ought to do about what he knows. If, in addition, the pupil actually engages in right conduct, the teacher will have been more than amply rewarded for his efforts. Kneller in reemphasizing Socrates position puts it thus: "the more the virtuous teacher presides over the practice of virtue, the more virtue the student will practice"<sup>80</sup> Perhaps, Socrates' practice of philosophy is a case in point. Socrates was feared by the state to be "corrupting" the youth and to forestall such threat, he was given a hemlock. The

implication of this is that Socrates teaching was so penetrating such that his teaching becomes obvious among the youth.

To this extent, the practice of education in Nigeria requires modification so as to allow for adequate grooming of individuals who are cognitively and morally balanced. This involves the introduction of Aristotle's model of moral education in our curriculum. The infusion of moral education will, to a large extent, prepare citizens to be intellectually sound and morally upright.

### **Aim and Objectives**

Specifically, the aim of this thesis is to emphasize the importance of moral education to the Nigerian educational system. And the objectives of this study are:

1. To show how moral degeneracy has impacted negatively both in our educational institutions and society at large.
2. To show that religious education is not synonymous with moral education as some scholars would want us to believe.
3. To show that the panacea or solution offered hitherto in resolving this crisis is wrong-headed and as such should be rejected.
4. To demonstrate that Aristotle's moral theory of virtue could help resolve the moral problems and also provide the relevant philosophical basis for teaching moral education in our schools.
5. To re-emphasize the holistic nature of education, viz: cognitive, affective and cultural.

### **Justification of the Study**

The justification lies in the fact that a crisis ridden education such as ours is a time bomb and requires redemption through appropriate moral education curriculum. The signs of growing moral crisis in Nigerian educational system, especially in areas of institutional as well as individual life are now too numerous to ignore. The moral crises range from all forms of academic and administrative frauds to rising profile of violence and prostitution in schools. Many scholars have traced the source of the problem to poor national leadership, infrastructural decay and funding. But all of these are physical symptoms of the real problem; debasement of morals in the lives of teachers, administrators, students and of course the political leaders. And since the school is a subset of the society, it is not spared of this social pathology. The near breakdown of our

social system and loss of values in our society calls for systematic reflection. This becomes more urgent when we consider the rate at which both the leaders and the followers commit immoral actions without any qualm. These vices are on the increase despite efforts to curb them through legal instruments, slogans, campaigns and establishment of government institutions and agencies to fight the vices. Achebe in his book, *The Trouble with Nigeria* laments that we are weighed down not only by ‘uncertainties but also moral crisis that reverberates in our economic and political landscapes’.<sup>81</sup> The vices are perpetrated by both the leaders and the followers with impunity. These vices are noticeable in our daily lives; in the home, in the school, in the public service, in the private sector, in government and in legislative assemblies. Achebe strongly charged that:

corruption in Nigeria has passed the alarming and entered the fatal stage; and Nigeria will die if we keep pretending that she is only slightly indisposed.<sup>82</sup>

The point here is that moral crisis is at the root of Nigeria underdevelopment. Hence we argue that the infusion of moral education in our school curriculum at all levels remains a viable option in resolving the crisis. The development that Nigeria is earnestly striving for will remain elusive without resolving the moral problems besieging her. According to Mariano Grondona, a society that desires development and social order must ensure ‘development-favorable cultures’ which thrive on moral law and social reality of the society.<sup>83</sup> Hence, the prevalence of morally bankrupt members of society is a danger to social order. The moral problems in Nigeria arise, to a very large extent, from value conflict among educated Nigerians and this is what has resulted in leadership deficits. Otonti Nduka, for instance, links the social vices among Nigerians to imbibing Western ethical values of individualism and thereby promoting egoistic and selfish tendencies. In his words, “Nigerians have been living in permutations and combinations of the two basic worlds...in the realm of values, Western inspired individualism and materialism have overshadowed all others.”<sup>84</sup> He, having lamented the pervasive entronement of bribery and corruption, certificate racketeering, examination malpractices, queries the adult Nigerians “How could they pass on anything worthwhile when, as evidenced in the goings-on throughout the length and breadth of this country, their stock-in-trade include the institutionalization of bribery and corruption...”<sup>85</sup> While emphasizing the place of moral education in combating the social crisis, he posits that:

it is then argued or claimed by the spokesmen earlier mentioned that the moral *status quo ante* and discipline will be restored...these claims are, at best, elements of a simplistic approach to an issue of extraordinary complexity, namely, moral education;...or even an attempt to play religious politics with education.<sup>86</sup>

Here, Nduka is of the view that those who are at the helms of affairs do not have the moral justification to complain or suggest introduction of religious knowledge as a panacea to the value crisis as they were also products of such.

### **Significance of the Study**

The study is motivated by the realization that the moral component of education given to young ones within the society is not only central but germane to peaceful coexistence of members of the society and individual well-being. The drive for sanity in the educational system will be more enhanced when stakeholders are imbued with moral probity. More importantly, this moral decline has become a disease eating systematically into the very vein of the entire nation. In this wise, it is expedient to infuse such values as honesty, patriotism, unity and national integration, tolerance and understanding of cultures, peace etc. into the educational curriculum. And as Nwani Akuma and Meshach Muruwei aver in their discussion of the utility of moral education, that “moral development” “promotes critical thinking and moral reasoning”<sup>87</sup> which positively impacts national development.

As such we have argued that a timely and correct solution to the problem of moral turpitude will significantly save the nation from total collapse of the social order and values system.

In the same vein, this work argued that religious knowledge and instruction cannot be a substitute for moral education. Religious instruction is here viewed as any form of teaching which entails transmitting to learners content of religion; it entails the rights, rites and objectives of the faith. Also religious education entails transmission to the young ones the ultimate basis of one’s faith revealed by the divine as well as how this mandates the believers to live in harmonious relationship with God and fellow human beings. As such, religious instruction transmits officially sanctioned understanding, doctrines, practices, and beliefs of a religious order with the hope that the student should come to embrace those teachings. Whereas, moral education, then, refers to the

transmission of critically arrived norms or standards- traditional or otherwise that defines, guides and regulates good or acceptable behavior among humans living together in a given society. It also includes transmission of other societal values like respect and recognition of human beings as persons who deserve compassion, love, justice, sanctity of human life e.t.c. This is further strengthened by the fact that education remains a potent mechanism to initiate, inculcate and develop sound moral character in its beneficiaries and an appreciation of the culture and world-views of a people. Hence, moral education is seen as a necessary condition for social control and an indispensable means of self-realization. Moral education employs rational discourse to induct learners into a moral life consistent with the value system and cultural life of the people. As such the work will relate value orientation and value inculcation such that every learner appreciates the essence of moral life in the achievement of overall life goal, thereby promoting moral values as an essentially needed item in the school and the society at large.

### **Methodology**

This study employs conceptual-analytic and reconstructive methods in achieving its objectives. The conceptual analysis is used to clarify concepts like education, moral virtue, intellectual virtue, practical wisdom and also to distinguish moral education from religious instruction/knowledge. The reconstructive method is also used to reconcile important elements in Aristotle's moral theory in order to evolve a holistic system of education for Nigeria.

### **Contribution to Knowledge**

The contribution of this research to knowledge is to bring to the fore the teaching of moral education in Nigerian Educational System. Another contribution is to show the place of moral education in the development of a person and the advancement of the society as well as strengthening of its institutions. In this wise, students will become morally conscious right from their early years in school. The parents through adult education programme will have opportunity to critically introspect on the kind of person they want to be and also be proud of their children. And above all, government stands to gain because the country can boast of more honest and public spirited people who are morally and intellectually sound that can face the future with confidence and not live in fear like cultists.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### The Idea of Education

#### 1.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the concept and nature of education. We began our discussion by clarifying the concept and essence of education. We analyzed and differentiated among many concepts that revolve around the concept of education. We equally rejected the conception of education as purely instrumental in achieving either economic or technological goals of the society. Such conception is argued to be extremely narrow. We also pointed out that education is a vital mechanism of cultural transmission and in this regard cannot ignore a conscious and deliberate transmission of worthwhile values to the recipients of such activity. In the final analysis we separated the concept of education from indoctrination and that education is the development of man's intellect and emotion in a non-dogmatic manner. Education does not entertain dogma in whatever form. Education, to sum up, is something which 'involves essentially processes which intentionally transmit what is valuable in an intelligible and voluntary manner and which creates in the learner a desire to achieve this.

#### 1.2 The Idea of Education

Etymologically 'Education' is a word believed to originate from two Latin words *educere*, which means 'to lead out' or 'to draw out' and *educare* which means 'to train', 'to nourish', 'to bring up'. In drawing out, education is believed to help trigger and awaken the hitherto latent innate potentials, tendencies, capacities and capabilities of a child for his/her benefits and her environment. Also, education as nourishing entails a careful and tender care for the child so as to enable her blossom and attain maturity holistically. Olu Osokoya says that education is the "leading out of the in-born powers and potentialities of the individuals in the society and the acquisition of skills, aptitude and competencies necessary for self-realization and for coping with life's problems"<sup>1</sup>. This is in line with Plato's position that education is a process of remembering what was known in the world of forms. Hence, education is taken to mean a guided process of self discovery of personal abilities.

However, philosophers and scholars have variously consented that etymological derivation of concepts is hardly enough to shed light on any concept. It is to this that we also believe that the concept of education is also not susceptible to a univocal definition.

To this extent, the word 'education' has lent itself to various definitions and "preferred meaning under the guise of objective analysis"<sup>2</sup> Otoni Nduka in his own conception defines education as the process of cultural transmission and using culture to embrace people's art, music, literature, philosophy, religion, commerce, political organization, science and technology as well as all other ideas and values, implicit and explicit, that permeate a society and bind its people into recognizable unit.<sup>3</sup> Archbald Callaway claims that education plays the role of an agent of culture and that it is the means whereby the culture of a particular society is inherited, changed (for better) and transmitted to the younger members of the society.<sup>4</sup> Lester Smith in his own contribution defines education as the culture which each generation purposely gives to those who are to be its successors, in order to qualify them for at least keeping, and if possible for raising the level of improvement which has been attained.<sup>5</sup> Richard Peters in his conception considers 'Education' not as a particular process; rather it encapsulates criteria to which any one of a family of processes must conform. A man who is educated is a man who has succeeded in relation to certain tasks on which he and his teacher have been engaged for a considerable period of time. This view of success is what Peters describes as true education wherein the teacher has a provisional authority that can be justified only if his or her teaching provides the critical equipment which would enable the students to evaluate what they were learning and to continue on their own. So, success implies that the teacher is able to help his pupil gain both intellectual and moral requirements demanded of any individual that is considered educated. Just as 'finding' is the achievement relative to looking', so 'being educated' is the achievement relative to a family of tasks which we call processes of education. To Peters 'education' like 'teaching' can be used as both a task and an achievement verb. Teachers can work away at teaching without success, and still be teaching; but there is a sense, also, in which teaching someone something implies success. In his illustration one can claim that 'I taught the boy the ablative absolute construction' which implies that one was successful in one's task. But one can also say 'I taught him Latin for years, but he learnt nothing.'<sup>6</sup> Similarly, I can work away at educating people, without the implication that I or they achieve success in the various tasks which are engaged in; but if I talk of them as 'educated' there is an implication of success.

But one can further raise the question of whose success we are talking about? Is it that of the teacher or of the learner? This is tantamount to asking to whose tasks the achievements which constitute 'being educated' are relative, those of the teacher or those

of the learner. Obviously both are usually involved, but it is important to realize that the tasks of the teacher could not be characterized unless we had a notion of the tasks of the learner. For whereas 'learning' could be characterized without introducing the notion of 'teaching', 'teaching' could not be characterized without the notion of 'learning'. The tasks of the teacher consist in the employment of various methods to get learning processes going. These processes of learning in their turn cannot be characterized without reference to the achievements in which they culminate. For to learn something *is* to measure up to some standard; to succeed in some respect. So the achievement must be that of the learner in the end. The teacher's success can only be defined in terms of that of the learner. Another important requirement apart from task achievement in education is that education is inseparable from judgments of value. Peters argues that it is a logical truth that any method of education employed by a teacher must put the pupil in a situation where he is learning, where some sort of task is presented to him. But a teacher might try to condition children to 'pick up' certain things without their realizing that they were picking anything up. In saying that this is not a process of education we would be implying that this was morally bad, because conditions of wittingness and voluntariness on the part of the pupil were missing; for we regard it as morally unjustifiable to treat others in this way. To say that we are educating people commits us to morally legitimate procedures. Often such minimal moral demands, which are connected with respect for persons, are further extended to exclude procedures such as giving children orders, which is thought by some to involve some sort of moral indignity. Discouragement of individual choice would be another procedure which many might condemn as being morally reprehensible. They might express their disapproval by saying that this was not 'education'.

### **1.2.1 Various uses of the concept of Education**

Hamm proposed that we can have a clear understanding of the concept of education if we isolate it by the uses to which it is put. The concept of education has been amenable to variety of available uses. John White uses school aims to explain the concept of education by identifying them as personal fulfilment, social and civic involvement, contributing to the economy and practical wisdom. Patrick Walsh provided instructive insights to varied uses of the concept.<sup>7</sup> For example, the questions about whether education is necessarily a good thing, or if we can have too much of it, or whether it is the sort of thing that we can ever be done with. Answer to any of these depends on which

sense of 'education' is intended. Thus those who believe the popular dictum that we learn to live and live to learn can admit that there is a sense of 'education' in which education does typically come to an end—people do finally graduate or drop out. But this need not at all inhibit us from insisting, in other contexts, that education is lifelong, a process without a finished product; a sense of 'education' which fits the African traditional society notion of the concept.

Most commonly, 'uneducated person' in contradistinction to educated person implies one who has not been to school (or who has learnt nothing there) and who has not otherwise learnt the kinds of things that schools teach: to read, write and calculate, a smattering of literature, history, science, etc. The example that comes to mind is the peasant Platon Karatayev in Tolstoy's *War and Peace* is uneducated in that sense. But now note that Platon can credibly be depicted as one who by upbringing, experience and grace has been rendered uncommonly resourceful and marvellously wise. When the chips were down and he and Prince Pierre Bezuhov were together, struggling as much for their souls as their lives, it is the cultivated Pierre who feels himself exposed<sup>8</sup>.

Again, some have contrasted schooling with education and rejected schooling in the name of education. Education is what begins when schooling is over; school is an interruption in a child's education; worse-school is positively mis-educative. Plausibility aside, that we even understand such quips turns at least partly on our grasp of a use of 'education' distinct from its use in specific reference to the kinds of learning associated, or ever likely to be associated, with school.<sup>9</sup> Another instance is the case wherein the whole societies have been, and are, uneducated in the sense of being 'unschooled in literacy and its products'. Yet anthropologists are apt to discourse as freely of their educational ways and systems as of their kinship, economic and political ones. This sense of the concept is rife in Anthropologists works on Africa. The sense of 'education' then involved is unlike the immediately previous one in not conveying any endorsement of what it describes. And in this sense, unlike either of the previous ones, only children could be described as 'uneducated', by which would be meant 'not-yet-educated'. Such uses of 'education', 'uneducated', etc. are not normally in competition with each other, in the sense that to employ one would not commit us to eschew others. Rather the language invites us to avail ourselves of all of them as they suit our changing purposes and contexts.

Indeed we could find ourselves moving about among them within a single discussion. Suppose, for instance, two parents are deliberating on the choice of a school



for their children. Their relevant interests include, let us say: what the schools in question have to offer in the way of academic, but also of social, development; what they provide in relation to what they themselves provide at home, or could provide, or could get other agencies to provide; what the schools provide in relation to what institutions of higher education and the job market expected, and in relation also to their own values and ideals in life; the present as well as the future happiness and well-being of their children; what might best suit the particular temperament and aptitudes of this or that individual child; what might be best for their children or, more narrowly, for their children's 'advancement', as against what might best express their own wider social commitments; and, no doubt, others. Now, as they discuss this angle and that, it is easy to imagine them employing 'education', 'educative', 'educator', etc. first in one sense and then in another, matching the complex criss-cross of available senses to the multiplicity and the interplay of their interests. So, 'John's education' may at one moment refer to what some lucky schools will provide him with, in the way, especially, of formal and publicly endorsed curriculum, but at another time to his education in the widest sense, a more general enterprise that will include much that is elusive and much that is highly personal, which will be serviced by a whole array of agencies. Or, 'education' may occur in connection with what a school is actually providing ('a lively education', 'a rather traditional education', etc.), or with what the parents themselves think it ideally should provide ('education' in the sense of the 'true' education), which may not be the same as that 'education' which the school is charged by society to provide. Finally, the parents may employ 'education' in an open-ended and heuristic way-like 'X' as the still unknown quantity-as a marker of something they are as yet not quite clear about, and then later in a more loaded way to encapsulate some set of pretty definite ideals, say, as a shorthand for 'a liberal education'. And of course, the kind of worldview and character the parents expect their children to exhibit.

It is important to observe the explicit transitions among these uses of 'education', our tacit knowledge here ordinarily far outstripping our ability to give it articulate definition. Suppose, however, that the parents did, now and then, find themselves at cross purposes. That might be thought to suggest some practical advantage in an agreement to limit themselves to just one of these uses. But then, if they are not also drastically to curtail the range of their perspectives on the choice of a school, they will have to cast around for synonyms or paraphrases for the excluded uses, and these may be, respectively, hard to come by. So the remedy may prove a greater strain than the original

problem. And, in any case, the parents have to hand a more natural remedy in those qualifying expressions, like 'true', 'so-called', 'in the widest sense', by which particular uses of 'education' can quite adequately be identified when the context alone is insufficient. But it is not just a matter of the parents being able to cope, despite the linguistic obstacles. Rather, in deliberations like theirs, the versatility of 'education' is a positive asset.

To suggest that the various uses of 'education' have some power to structure that considerable manifold on which collectively they draw is to bring us back fairly sharply to the question of the kinds and degrees of relationship that obtain between them. One way in which they hold together is by virtue of similarities between them, common threads. They are certainly not so many homonyms. Thus learning is implied in them all, indeed it would seem both rather a lot of learning (thus education is a protracted business) and, unlike training, learning of many different kinds. All might be said to make an implicit reference of some kind to the learning being of value (the uncontroversially trivial or evil would not as such qualify), and indeed of a value that promised to be more than short-term, to be lasting. In most uses a further delineation of the relevant learning is implied as that which can be viewed in some way as a catching up on a social deposit of knowledge and skill, a tradition or culture, and, finally, there is in most uses some more or less substantial reference also to tradition as a process, to handing on or instruction in the widest sense.

Certainly the marshalling and binding roles which we ascribed to these uses would be greatly facilitated if they continued to relate to each other precisely in the respects in which they were different, if they constituted something that approximated an ordered set. A first step in pursuing that is to notice that we are not here faced with endlessly many distinctions, rather with just a few which by cutting across and compounding each other generate all the main uses of 'education' and its cognates. There are, I suggest, four distinctions. First, 'education' as a formal enterprise is to be distinguished from 'education' in the much wider sense. Second, in the case of each sense a further distinction may be drawn between normative and merely descriptive modes of it. Third, there then further applies to all four of these categories a scale which runs from the very open (nominal, general) at one end to the very loaded (substantive, specific) at the other. In the process this scale passes from standard usage, through semi-standard perhaps, to the stipulative and theoretical and, by the same token, from the widely-assumed to the hotly contested (to the point, indeed, at which there are numbers of

competing uses, about equally but differently loaded). So, each concrete use of 'education' is either formal or wide in sense, and either normative or descriptive, and is loaded to one of several possible degrees. Some examples may help here. The use of 'education' to mean 'initiation into the best that has been thought and written', or the competing 'promotion of interest-based learning', would be at once formal, usually-though perhaps not inevitably-normative, and loaded beyond standard levels. On the other hand, the anthropologists facing into some previously unstudied society will stand ready with both the formal and the wide senses of 'education', each to be employed in a non-committal descriptive way and each heuristically kept as skeletal as possible. Again, in deeming the illiterate peasant to be 'uneducated' we invoke something formal; we usually mean normatively to convey that she has 'missed out' on this; and in specifying literacy and suchlike we load it more indeed than when we play the anthropologist, but still lightly, standardly, and less than when we are working up our personal statements about education.

Finally, there is another distinction between 'education' as a practice and 'education' as the second-order study of that practice. This, however, does not have the compounding effect of the previous senses since though 'education' as the name of a practice breaks down in the three criss-crossing ways we have noticed, 'education' as the name of a branch of study does not. The question now is whether we could crucially enhance the emergent impression of a network by going on to show in respect of these controlling distinctions that, and how, in each case each of its two or more members was not only useful in its own right, but that they were useful-even necessary-to each other, symbiotically co-existent, logically correlative. In what follows I shall attempt this demonstration for the first two of these distinctions.

### **1.2.2 Formal Education and Informal Education**

We encounter the formal sense of 'education' in everyday conversations about 'the state of education' and 'the educational system'; in references to certain professions and offices, like 'educator', 'educationist', 'the minister of education'; when in a curriculum vitae we find it written that the subject 'received his education at schools x and y, and university z'; in assumptions about graduates being 'highly educated persons', etc. In all these cases there is involved our practice of unqualifiedly representing as 'education' what we also and otherwise qualify as 'formal education', and think of as but

a part of education. At its most conventional and common this formal sense of 'education' is to be elucidated by reference to two familiar sets of institutions. Schools and like establishments make up one of these. The other includes centrally, though not exclusively, what might be called 'the disciplines of the book'-history, literature, science, mathematics, design, etc.-in general those areas of study for which literacy is a more or less indispensable condition of progress. We can see, furthermore, that these two sets of institutions are themselves related. At any rate, it is obvious that schools and like establishments are in their turn to be identified in some reference to book-learning. It is thus that we would usually distinguish them from other kinds of institution that are also concerned with teaching and learning, like driving-schools, or that are also especially for the young, like play-groups and youth-clubs. But, and with all due respect to the home-educated and the self-educated, there is also a reverse relationship of sense, if not quite so close a one. For even the home-educated and the self-educated will have had to submit themselves to a 'schooling', that is to say, not only to a content but, by the very nature of that content, to a process which will in significant respects have resembled that of school. Again, they are deemed to have come up to certain standards in their engagements with letters and is it not probable that here too a sidelong glance is being cast at school? I am suggesting, then, that schools are too prominent in our consciousness to be omitted from an elucidation of what we ordinarily mean by 'education' in its formal sense. This remains a sort of biped, identified by reference both to a certain content (letters, etc.) and to a certain kind of agency and process (school). Even when it stands on just one leg the other continues to contribute to its balance.

The foregoing analysis, like the examples from which it sets out, was of '(formal) education' at one level of loading. As we intimated earlier there are also both more open and more loaded uses of it. On the one hand we sometimes connect into the word extra conditions, for example, exclusion of indoctrination or (more controversially) a limitation to interest-based learning. This we are particularly liable to do in such contexts as the discussion of educational aims and values. On the other hand there is a particularly thin and open use of '(formal) education' to mean something like 'any kind of more or less sustained and systematic induction into some substantial proportion of whatever it is that is, or is deemed to be, essential to know'. Whereas, a contrasting consideration of education in the informal sense, for example, in connection with the wisdom of Tolstoy's peasant, or in the claim (intelligible to us even should we find it extravagant) that school is an interruption in a child's education; or in the idea that education should be life-long.

(the point of which is not that people should still be taking degrees in their eighties!). It is also quite frequently to be found associating with travel that broadens the mind, relationships that promote maturity, or experiences that involve significant discovery in respect of one's own powers or one's own limitations. Again, it is the sense that is being invoked in the familiar assertion that parents are the first and the chief educators of their children-for usually something wider and deeper is intended by this than that they instruct in the alphabet and help with homework but one which entails initiation into the society and a preparation for adulthood. This epitomises African Traditional education which emphasized social responsibility, job orientation, political participation and moral values.<sup>10</sup>

According to Walsh, 'development', 'upbringing' and 'socialisation' are close relatives of this sense of 'education'. 'Growing-up' is another member of the family, especially that use of it which occurs in 'he never really grew up' as remarked of a well-formed adult of the species. And of course 'learning' relates as intimately to this as to other uses of 'education'. None of these is actually synonymous with 'education (in the widest sense)'<sup>11</sup>. But we might, perhaps, experiment with combinations of them and come up with some quite reasonable definitions of it, for instance: 'the whole *sum* of that learning of a person, and what promotes or has promoted it, which makes for (or, which is considered to make for) his becoming, or being, a developed human being'. But now we have to note that in this case there is something not altogether appropriate about a definition-at any rate a bare and unaccompanied definition. For education in the widest sense, as a whole, though it includes formal education (where that exists) within itself, is precisely not something formal, focussed, landscaped, systematic. Thus it does not have points of reference as convenient as the two kinds of institution by which we earlier pinned down '(formal) education'. To convey its meaning, then, we might well expect to have to resort to some more jagged and discursive account. *So* we might append to our earlier definition some lengthy gloss like the following: 'it embraces much of what is learnt outside and in *no* reference to classroom and school-as well as of what is learnt inside these or in some reference to them; much of what is 'picked up' as well as of what is formally studied; a great deal of what is 'caught' as well as of what is taught; much that is only very broadly cognitive as well as much that is more narrowly so; a lot that is specialised and idiosyncratic as well as a lot that is common, and so on.

### 1.3 The Problem of Aims in Education

One fundamental issue that the analytic school has thrown up is the problem of 'aims' in education. While it is traditionally held that the aims of any system of education tell us what conception of education that society has since as fundamental purposes of education; they also determine the character of everything such as: institutions, curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. And that one way to get clear about the aims of education is, therefore, to begin to clarify what such society regards as her educational aims. Just because aims are not written down, does not mean that they do not exist. They can be implicit as well as explicit, and can be embodied in the everyday practices of teachers and students, as well as in government documents. Indeed, the printing of aims in a document is neither necessary nor sufficient condition for education to have aims, since documents can be ignored.<sup>12</sup> However, the process of education requires that we have an overview of what we intend to achieve. 'Aims' of education is a searchlight or guide to the essence of the activity of education.

In the contemporary discourse of education, the liberals, postmodernists, feminists all share a common belief that education has 'aims'. Liberals champion the view that promoting autonomy – seeing to it that young ones develop into individuals who are self-governing in the conduct of their lives – is a vital aim of education. Liberal theorists such as Callan, Levinson, Reich seek to create educational experiences focused on helping students develop the rational capacities and desires for self-choice, regardless of the content of those choices. In contrast, critical pedagogues such as Allman and Farahmandpur did not only see autonomy as important 'aim' of education but also tacitly impose forms of content requirements on their definitions of self-direction. As such, autonomy is threatened when students adopt certain substantive beliefs or make choices associated with oppressive socialization.<sup>13</sup> Lyotard, a prominent postmodernist, for example will want to encourage inventiveness to be part of the aim of education. As such various schools of thought consider placing priority on different values that should constitute educational aims.

In assessing what it is to have an aim in education, Cornell Hamm interprets the 'aims of Education' in various ways.<sup>14</sup> An analysis of various possible interpretations that can be given to the question, 'What are the aims of education?' It is argued that a response to this question depends significantly on circumstance, context, and questioner as to what is being referred to in any particular instance. There is, first, a meaning of the

question which is similar to ‘What is the meaning of “education”?’ The request is for clarification of the concept ‘education’. This has its parallel to questions about the aim of reform. If in response to that, one were to say that the aim of reform is to make people better one would be expressing a definition of ‘reform’. In effect the statement ‘The aim of reform is to make men better’ is a tautology masquerading as an aim. And in a similar way the request for the aim of education is a request for the meaning of education. Answers to such requests are not very informative if one already knows the meaning. They might nevertheless serve as reminders about what the task of education is.

A second interpretation of the question is informed by the multiplicity of criteria attributes of education, and is a request for direction about what is to be emphasized in education at a particular time. Depending on an imbalance created at different periods in history, different aims will emerge as the focus for attention to correct the imbalance. Such imbalance may be regarding the task or achievement aspect of education, as when John Dewey emphasized the importance of child centeredness in education in juxtaposition to mastery of content. For Dewey the need to observe and respect the child as a person became paramount. So for him the ‘aim of education’ was growth and development. At other times the imbalance may concern the lop-sidedness of content, as when science and mathematics become the main focus of student achievement. The imbalance is to be corrected by focusing on the arts and literature. Thus the ‘aim of education’ becomes development of the whole child. On this reading, the request for aims is a request for a clear statement about what one must put emphasis on in education at this time.

A third interpretation for ‘What is the aim of education?’ is ‘What is the purpose of a specific activity *in* education?’ The former question is simply mistaken for the latter. Whereas the logic of ‘aims *of* education’ is questionable, the phrase ‘aims *in* education’ is most sensible and to be encouraged. Here the meaning clearly concerns teaching and learning goals or objectives when reference is to a smaller subset of the wider concern of education. We might often ask, with absolute clarity and serious concern, such questions as: What is the aim of doing this experiment?...of going on a field trip? e.t.c. The request is for articulation of the appropriateness of a specific teaching act or activity in the school context within the understood wider purpose of bringing about education.

A fourth view could be viewed as a request for a justification of education. Some people are fully aware of the meaning of education but are nevertheless puzzled about which particular knowledge is worthwhile and in particular the reasons why certain forms

of knowledge are important. They want to know why science is more important than technology, why poetry rather than comic books, why nutrition rather than cooking. The request is for justification, for reasons and strong argument that support such claims. This is a most understandable and laudable concern, but it is perhaps mistakenly referred to as a concern about the 'aims of education'.

A fifth interpretation of 'What is the aim of education?' can be interpreted to imply 'What are the instrumental uses of education?' It is in response to such an interpretation that one is inclined to say, 'Education has no aims'; for the assumption in the question thus interpreted is that unless one can point to a beneficial effect of having been educated, then education is not worth pursuing. Education then is 'useless'. This emphasis on utility denies the worthwhileness of education for its own sake. Now it probably is true that certain effects of being educated have utility and serve other ends. It would be surprising if an educated person could do nothing better or could not perform certain skills that might be employable and thus help to earn money for living. But that would not make a good reason of education employability, as many people erroneously think. The error is that the question of 'What is the use of it?' is legitimate to ask about education. It is to think of education as a merchandisable product, as an investment in the monetary sense, as an instrument for other uses. From the perspective of the individual the personal gain stemming from education is viewed in terms of job success, prestige, escape from physical labour, high pay, and so on. From the perspective of the community the pay-off in education is thought to be good citizenship, social cohesiveness, and (depending on one's social philosophy) perhaps social levelling, democratic practice, equality, change, or mental health and adjustment. From the perspective of business, education is thought of as an instrument of training to keep the wheels of industry moving, to keep the economy going, to select and prepare young people for occupations and professions. What is common to all these perspectives is the view that unless education has some such demonstrable pay-off it is a waste and not worthy of pursuit. To such people the notion that education is intrinsically worthwhile because it develops the mind and the person.

The difficulty is what the aim of education should be. In the contemporary debate the idea that education has aims was subjected to critical examination by Peters. He disagrees that education has aims because the aims are built into the concept of education itself.<sup>15</sup> Peters' analysis of the concept of education is so instructive and striking. Peters



adopts a two-pronged approach. First, he offers a critical survey of the word 'Aim' then he tries to show that unless the concept 'Aim' is understood, the 'Aim of Education' cannot be meaningfully discussed. Peters says that the word 'aim' implies a distant objective. He also says it is a pursuit of a goal which is not easy to come by. 'Aim' to Peters equally carries a notion of a target that might or might not be achieved. Illustratively, Peters argues that when we ask a man the purpose of raising up his hands, we have in our minds, possible alternative answers. It could be he wants to point to something up. It might also be that he is trying to know the direction of the wind. It could as well be any other alternative that we could possibly suggest. We simply want to know which of these alternatives is the purpose for his action. On the other hand, the moment we ask an individual about his aim for an activity, there are no alternatives open to us. By asking about 'aim' for his activity, we simply expect him to be more precise, so that we know his target. Peters argues thus:

If however we were not very sure from the context what the alternative specifications might be, we might say, 'what is your purpose in raising your hand?' We would, in other words, identify it in a minimal sense as a hand-raising action and seek an explanation of it by asking for the agent's purpose in performing the action so specified. We might even in certain specific contexts, when perhaps we were suspicious as well as puzzled about his action, ask for his motive in raising his hands. But surely would not ask what he was aiming at in raising his hand... If we said this, it would sound rather quaint.<sup>16</sup>

The concept 'aim' always carries with it some of the nuances associated with its natural home; in context of shooting and throwing. It suggests the concentration of attention and the specification of some precise objective. Peters insists that one basic reason why educationists talk a lot about 'aim of education' is because the concept of 'education', by its nature involves value. Hence a reference to aim of education implies value judgment. He puts it succinctly in his essay, "Must An Educator have An Aim?" thus:

I suppose the conviction that an educator must have aims is generated by the concept of 'education' itself; for it is a concept that has a standard or worth as were; built into it. To speak of 'education' even in contexts quite remote from that of classroom, is to commit oneself, by implication, to a judgment of value.<sup>17</sup>

Peters argues that because of the type of value judgment attached to education, it is wrong for educationist to talk about 'aim of education'. This is because 'aim' implies

universality while education does not. Peters believes that if this universal application of 'aim' is to be accepted as a legitimate aspect of the concept of education, it means that once the aim or aims are found or stated, they can be applied to all societies at all times. But educational values differ from one place to another; they cannot be universal because of the different needs and interests of different societies. Therefore, to look for 'aims of education' is an unnecessary and fruitless pursuit. Peters finally in his analysis identifies 'aim' with 'modified ideals'. He argues that:

Ideals are connected with wishes; they pick out objectives which by definition, cannot be realized in practice. If they become more practicable, if as it were, the sights are lowered a bit, they become 'aim', which are objectives that can be attained given concentration and coordination of efforts.<sup>18</sup>

Some scholars have rejected Peters' analytical and conceptual approach to aims of education because Peters' analysis of the aims of education is too idealistic and unrealistic while some believe that Peters failed to decipher correctly between the 'nature of' and the characteristic of' something. Some other critics attack Peters because in the latter's attempt to protect the freedom of the individual denied the individual same. Roland wood quarrels with Peters' claim that that the aim of education is not achievable. Roland Woods, for example, believes that Peters' 'Linguistic Analysis' raises two questions:

1. "Whether his analysis of 'aim' and 'education' are tenable' and
2. "Whether his analysis do indeed underscore the naturalness of education as being possessed of aims."<sup>19</sup>

Woods argues that because his answer to the first question is negative he does not bother to answer the second in any detail, as his answer to this is going to be negative. He concludes that because the answers to the two questions are negative, it is not necessary making attempts to answer the question whether or not analytic philosophy contributes anything to theories of education.

Woods says that any linguistic analysis should concern itself with looking at what words mean to the generality of those who use these words and not what the words should mean from the point of view of the individual who is doing the analysis. He believes that the analyst should examine these words as they are generally used and understood. Woods therefore, believes that Peters has fallen victim to this type of

situation. He believes that Peters analyses the words 'aim' from his own concepts and not from the concepts of their general usages. Woods writes:

It is of the utmost importance for evaluating the success of any putative piece of linguistic analysis, to determine whether the words analyzed occur with their standard meanings, whether they occur as customarily used and understood by fluent speakers of the language<sup>20</sup>.

Woods says that it is not true, as Peters wants people to believe, that when they use the word 'aim' it necessarily implies only the three criteria:

- (a) when we want people to specify more precisely what they are trying to do
- (b) the concentration of attention on and direction of efforts towards an objective that is not too palpable or close to hand
- (c) the possibility of failure or falling short.<sup>21</sup>

Woods agrees that these criteria, at certain situations, could apply to 'aim' but argues that on other situations, other criteria not stated by Peters could also apply. Woods' quarrel with Peters is that that the latter should not tie people down into believing that it is these three criteria alone that can apply to 'aim'. He says there is nothing wrong when people aim at things that are 'fairly near at hand' and 'equally fairly easily achieved'<sup>22</sup> Woods wonders whether people should begin to change their notion of 'aim' (supposing they have already accepted Peters' concept of 'aim') when they admit that one can actually aim at something near or easily achievable.

Peter Gilroy also argues that Peters sees education as a normative concept that identifies what is intrinsically worthwhile by 'laying down criteria to which a family of activities must conform' in order that such activities can properly be identified as educational activities. By this Peters sees that in discussing aims of education one is accepting that it is the normative aspect of 'education' that 'aims' are picking out: that is, the aims of education are identified by means of the norms that are part and parcel of 'education'. Gilroy pointed out that Peters only addresses himself to understanding the meaning of 'education' involves understanding the different criteria that are involved in elucidating the concept and so coming to see that any aim of education must be related to the intrinsically worthwhile as identified by his analysis of the concept of education. He, in essence also reducing aims to be inherent in the concept of education.

Following Woods and Dray, Peter Gilroy criticizes Peters' approach of analysis of education and how this might be problematic. He argues that the tight connection asserted between education and its aims by Peters reveals a weakness of his understanding of the aims of education. Thus citing Woods and Dray, Gilroy offers counter-examples to Peters' analysis of education which shows that Peters' analytic approach is prescribing one use of the term over another.<sup>23</sup> Peters' analysis of aims of education is considered prescriptive in nature and as such stands in need of justification that goes beyond conceptual analysis. In contrast to Peters approach, Gilroy avers that functional approach to understanding the aims of education is more fruitful. This approach centres upon the view that the meanings of terms are in most cases dependent upon the social contexts within which they function. As education is by definition a social activity, the concepts that cluster around our use of educational terms are inherently and inevitably social, and so a philosophy of education should be expected to concentrate on understanding the social context within which education operates. It is this movement away from conceptual analysis towards functional analysis which should therefore typify this new approach to understanding the aims of education.

To this end, we shall look at Schofield's consideration of four ways of expressing the idea of 'aim' or 'aims' to strengthen the position that it may not be totally out place to use the metaphor 'aims' but this must be put in proper perspective. The variants are as follow:

- i. THE AIM OF education
- ii. THE AIMS OF education
- iii. AIMS OF education
- iv. AIMS IN education

Schofield in his analysis of the first expression identifies that this way of stating 'aim' signifies a prescription. That is, trying to prescribe a kind of ideal for education and by this, such usage is dogmatic and breeds an air of toughness. This way of expressing 'aim' of education gives the impression that there is only one way to conduct the business of education. It also shows toughness and narrowness like we have in Spartan, Jesuitical and Calvinistic education. For example, Spartan education aims at producing warriors. A close examination of this usage of 'aim' will reveal that the process of such education will fail to meet up with the three criteria of what can be regarded as education. In some

cases, this way of stating 'aim' may come close to 'indoctrination' In the words of Schofield, "Nothing is likely to produce over-determined education more quickly than the form of statement 'THE AIM OF education is...'"<sup>24</sup> The second variant, which is the plural of the first, is also considered to be prescriptive though less dogmatic than the first expression. This expression reveals that several aims are implied. It is however related to the first by virtue of its definiteness by the article 'The'. The third expression is neither dogmatic nor prescriptive because the definite article 'The' has been dropped. This form of expression is suggested by Schofield thus: 'some of the aims of education are' such expression can be regarded as non-prescriptive and 'inclusive' in nature. In this case there is no indication of strictness or toughness in the expression which makes it impossible for the listener or reader to suggest other aims which are not given by the writer or speaker. The last variant is 'Aims in education'. This differs significantly from the previous three expressions. While the previous ones give the impression that 'aims' were something outside education; something towards which education was directed. It is for this and other reasons that Peter rejected the idea of 'the aims of education' because he regards such as 'external' to education. But when we talk about 'aims in education' we are actually making a descriptive statement and we are not imposing on education what it must achieve. In this regard D.J. O'Connor attempted to give aims in terms of general agreement wherein any educational professional will not disagree with any of the expressed aims. The list as stated by O'Connor and quoted by Schofield are:

- i. To provide men and women with the minimum of skills necessary for them to take their place in society and to seek further knowledge.
- ii. To provide men and women with vocational training that will enable them to be self-supporting
- iii. To awaken an interest in and a taste for knowledge.
- iv. To make people critical.
- v. To put people in touch with and train them to appreciate the cultural and moral achievements of mankind.<sup>25</sup>

#### **1.4 Education as Initiation**

Another vital point that Peters made in his analysis of the concept of education is his description of education as 'a process of initiation' Though the term initiation figures significantly in the writings of educational philosophers, and it has been associated with both the concept of education and the concept of indoctrination. Lodge as examined by

Hudson, for example, maintains that "initiation is a necessary condition of education."<sup>26</sup> It was Peters however who had a very incisive discussion of the concept.

According to Peters education must not be defined in terms of specific processes; it is not training; it is not instruction; it is not even teaching. Education can take place without any of these, and any of these can take place without education taking place. Basically, as has been said, education involves the bringing about of a desirable state of mind. To become educated, one must come to care about the valuable things involved so that she will want to achieve the relevant standards. Furthermore, she must be initiated into the content of the activity or forms of knowledge in a meaningful way, so that he knows what he is doing; drill and habit are not enough.<sup>27</sup> Since drill entails formation of habits through regular practice of stereotyped exercises which does not allow free input on the part of the recipient. And whereas, education entails that the learner must do things freely. But freedom according to Peters is not to be made into the central principle of education. For, if education involves the transmission of worthwhile content, there must be some kind of authority which dictates the content which is worthwhile. For example, Plato's conception of education involves turning the eye of the soul outwards towards the light. And this is more appropriate than the models of moulding and of growth. Plato's insistence on seeing and grasping for oneself reveals the contrast between being trained and being educated. A man may be highly skilled or trained, but if he has a very limited conception of what he is doing and its place in a coherent pattern of life, he is not what one can call an 'educated' man.<sup>28</sup> 'Training' suggests the acquisition of appropriate habits of response in a limited situation; it lacks the wider cognitive implications of 'education'. 'This connection between "education" and cognitive content explains why it is that some activities rather than others seem so obviously to be of educational importance. Few skills have a wide-ranging cognitive content. For example, in history, science, or literature there is an immense amount to know, and, if it is properly assimilated, it constantly throws light on, widens, and deepens one's view of countless other things.'<sup>29</sup> But the educated man is distinguished not so much by what he does as by what he 'sees' or 'grasps'. All this leads up to Peters' position wherein education is described as initiation. The argument is not, as has already been said, that education is some particular kind of transaction, such as training, or instruction, or even teaching; rather it states criteria to which all such transactions have to conform. Education, is to sum up, something which 'involves essentially processes which intentionally transmit what is valuable in an intelligible and voluntary manner and which create in the learner a

desire to achieve it, this being seen to have its place along with other things in life.<sup>130</sup> The view of education as initiation stresses that initiation is always into some body of knowledge and mode of conduct which takes time and determination to master. Furthermore there is an important element of impersonality, a body of 'impersonal content and procedures which are enshrined in public traditions'. 'Those who, like Dewey, have opposed the notion of education as transmission of a body of knowledge, have often stressed the importance of "critical thinking" and "problem solving".<sup>131</sup> This has received scathing criticism from some scholars. You learn to 'criticize' poetry before you have listened to it, attended to it, pondered upon it; poetry is even taught as an exercise in so-called 'critical thinking'. History is used, as it were, 'to provide riders for problem-solving'. But one cannot be intelligently critical without knowing something to be critical about. You have to learn science and history, not simply their content, but their procedures, and you can only do that by doing them, and often doing them with a good teacher. 'The procedures of a discipline can only be mastered by an exploration of its established content under the guidance of one who has already been initiated.'<sup>132</sup> Also, Peters avers that when we have earned the right to be critical, we have to recognize that 'the critical procedures by means of which established content is assessed, revised, and adapted to new discoveries have public criteria written into them that stand as impersonal standards to which both teacher and learner must give their allegiance.'<sup>133</sup> There are personal conditions for the acquisition of this continuing state of being educated. At the more advanced stages, there is little distinction between teacher and taught; both are exploring a common world; and this is a human, shared experience. 'This feeling of fraternity is part of the emotional underpinning for an enterprise conducted according to impersonal principles.'<sup>134</sup>

But one can mistake the place and importance of the personal in teaching. According to Peters "The enjoyment of good personal relations" with pupils is in danger of becoming a substitute for teaching them something.'<sup>135</sup> The 'fraternity' mentioned 'is respect for persons, not intimate relations with pupils. In a teaching situation love must be a type that is appropriate to the special type of relationship in which the teacher is placed, to his concept of them as pupils rather than as sons and brothers.' This is all specially true of the later stages of education rather than of the earlier, where the slogan 'We teach children, not subjects' is more appropriately applicable. At the later stage the emphasis is more on the canons implicit in the forms of thought than on individual avenues of initiation. And respect for persons, 'enlivened by fraternity ... provides the warmth in

which the teacher can perform his cardinal function of exhibiting the form of thought into which he is trying to initiate others.' There is nothing incompatible in this, he says, with the best in the 'growth' theory, though one must keep in mind that education is not always all the time following what a child naturally wants to do. The extreme 'wanting' and 'interest' theory in fact neglects the fluidity of wants. 'What people in fact want or are interested in is, to a large extent, a product of their previous initiation.' Once initiated, the values are seen to be self-justifying, intrinsically valuable. The initiated teacher, or pupil, who recognizes beauty, 'the elegance of a proof... the cogency of an argument, the clarity of an exposition, the wit of a remark...' who cares for truth, justice and good taste-needs to find no external justification for these values. Indeed to ask him what it all aims at, is useless. For Peters, only 'barbarians outside the gates' can ask the question. Of course, science, mathematics, and even history can be practically useful, and this has its importance.

To this end, Peters examines the three criteria, normative, cognitive, and procedural, which he found to be implicit in the central usages of the term education and provides "a more positive" and "synthetic" account of the nature of education. Let us examine a little more closely why the term initiation is used to describe the process of education. In these writings, education is characterized as involving the development of mind. But this development is not a product of individual experience as the empiricists held. Instead, it is "the product of the initiation of an individual into public traditions enshrined in the language, concepts, beliefs, and rules of a society"<sup>36</sup> There is a social dimension to the development of mind, and this is why it is appropriate to compare education to a process of initiation even suggests that all education, insofar as it involves initiation into public traditions, can be regarded as a form of socialization. Peters goes on to criticize both the molding and growth models of education for lacking "a sense of what D. H. Lawrence called 'the holy ground' that stands between teacher and taught." Both of these models fail to do justice to the givenness of the content that is taught and the criteria on the basis of which this content is developed and criticized. These models ignore "the cardinal fact that education consists essentially in the initiation of others into a public world picked out by the language and concepts of a people and in encouraging others to join in exploring realms marked out by more differentiated forms of awareness"<sup>37</sup> Again it is because education consists in "experienced persons turning the eye of others outward to what is essentially independent of persons," that it is appropriate to liken education to a process of initiation<sup>38</sup>



In Elmer John Thiessen's interpretation of Peters' notion of initiation, he argues that Peters has in mind the initiation of the individual into the seven or eight "modes of thought and awareness," or "forms of knowledge," each with its central concepts, distinctive logical structure, and unique criteria of truth. These forms of knowledge are viewed as "a public inheritance" that parents and teachers are inviting the child to share, and into which he is again "initiated"<sup>39</sup> to get "the barbarian" outside the gates, inside "the citadel of civilization"<sup>40</sup> Thiessen avers that initiation is general enough to cover a wide range of activities like training, instruction, and teaching, all of which can be part of education. He insists that Peters' comparison of initiation and education is consistent with his analysis of the various criteria governing the concept of education. In his words

...the comparison of education to initiation is consistent with the second group of criteria of education involving knowledge and understanding. Initiation also presupposes that the initiate has freely chosen to be initiated and thus the requirements of "wittingness and voluntariness" are satisfied<sup>41</sup>

Thiessen took a detour to examine the concept of indoctrination with the intent of highlighting the close affinity of the two concepts. In order to compare the concepts of initiation and indoctrination, he started looking at the nature of indoctrination. Thiessen acknowledges that majority of scholars agree that methods criterion rather than the criterion of intention is a necessary condition of the pejorative sense of indoctrination. By content criterion, we mean what is taught within the curricula whereas methods criterion entails how this is taught. To Thiessen, whatever else initiation might mean, it clearly has a methods component to it and to this extent it is not out of place to compare it with the methods of indoctrination. In order to be clear on methods that are indoctrinatory, Thiessen provided some list of teaching methods often regarded as indoctrinatory in contemporary writing and then identifies certain general features central to the methods criterion of indoctrination. The first one he calls Non-evidential Teaching which Green describes as indoctrination because such teaching creates a "non-evidential style of belief." Such teaching can be characterized in various ways. 1. It can involve teaching which simply fails to give reasons, evidence or arguments for the beliefs taught. 2. preoccupation with what is taught rather than how it is taught. Quoting Green, Thiessen suggests that non evidential teaching is "when, in teaching, we are concerned simply to lead another person to a correct answer, but are not correspondingly concerned that they arrive at that answer on the basis of good reasons, then we are indoctrinating." 3. Concern about the preoccupation with learning correct answers is at times expressed in terms of an

objection to mindless drill, recitation, and rote memorization are also seen as indoctrinatory by some. 4. A final method of non-evidential teaching involves attempts to persuade the subject "by force of the indoctrinator's personality, by emotional appeal, or by use of a variety of rhetorical devices," rather than by reasons, evidence, and proof. 5. Misuse of Evidence.

Thiessen picks on the last classification for consideration; a case where one does not entirely disregard reasons and evidence, but involves a misuse of reasons and evidence. He highlighted Wilson's six ways in which this misuse is described. First, indoctrinatory methods are sometimes associated with deliberate falsification of evidence. Second, a feature more frequently associated with indoctrination involves the use of "rationalizations" in contrast to genuine reasons and arguments. Third "making use of reasons for a predetermined conclusion," is another expression closely related to the above, which is sometimes used to identify indoctrinatory methods. Here reasons are not given or sought in an open-ended search for truth, but as a means to defend accepted beliefs, or as a weapon against opposed beliefs. Fourth, indoctrination is often associated with "a one-sided or biased presentation of a debatable issue," or with the suppression of counter-evidence. Fifth, the misuse of evidence is not limited to controversial issues. It can equally arise with established forms of knowledge.

To this extent indoctrination is described in terms of using any pedagogical method which is "inconsistent with the requirements of the general nature of inquiry" or which "violates the criteria of inquiry" of the forms of knowledge involved. Sixth and finally, misuse of evidence also occur when there is a violation of the logical status of the beliefs being taught. Also the misuse of authority is identified as involving indoctrinatory teaching methods though it is difficult to define precisely what methods are involved in a misuse of authority because the teaching process by its very nature involves a type of authority situation as such one must be willing to distinguish between a proper use and a misuse of authority. Thiessen describes the teacher-pupil relationship as one in which "the teacher has to learn to be in authority and to be an authority without being authoritarian." The latter being what is constantly associated with indoctrination.<sup>42</sup>

Again focusing at the issue from student's angle, indoctrinatory methods are also described as violating student autonomy<sup>43</sup> While Thiessen admits that autonomy, like authority, is very much a matter of degree. However, when the teacher fails to respect the autonomy of the student then such will be indoctrination. Thiessen further concurs with R.S. Peters, Benson and other scholars who have identified doctrinaire and dogmatic

teaching as indoctrination. For example, he cites Benson as describing the dogmatic presentation as involving "the promotion of the misleading impression that p is true simply because the indoctrinator says it is or because p is so obvious and certain as to require no defense."<sup>44</sup> The definition above indicates that dogmatic teaching is closely related to the non-evidential teaching as already mentioned above. Indoctrination is also frequently associated with the refusal to let students think for themselves. Teaching methods which discourage the development of "a critical spirit" are frequently identified as indoctrinatory.

Having highlighted various shades of definitions by different scholars, Thiessen attempts to argue that all teaching is unavoidably indoctrinating. This he claims becomes clear when we focus on what is involved in initiating children into the forms of knowledge so essential to education. Thiessen examines how this problem arises by considering such aspects of education as the authoritative nature of the initiation process, the force of tradition, the way in which children learn by imitation and identification, and finally what is involved in learning to be rational. According to Thiessen, indoctrination occurs in situations where there is some degree of authority control, and thus it is basically with children and mostly at the early stages of education that we should be most concerned about indoctrination. The issue of indoctrination is inherent in childhood education and that "men have childhoods". As such the failure of past analyses of indoctrination is that scholars tend to discuss indoctrination in terms of features that only apply to adult learning. At this point, Thiessen conflates initiation with indoctrination. He avers that given the authoritative nature of initiation process, it is in the same class with indoctrination. In his words, "It is the parent, the teacher, or society, not the child, who determines the initiation into which the child is initiated. The child is simply not given a choice. But, if, as we have seen, indoctrination is understood to involve the violation of individual autonomy or the manipulation of the subject, then the initiation process necessarily involves indoctrination."<sup>45</sup>

Thiessen accuses Peter of inadequate conceptualization of initiation. He claims "Peters fails to do justice to the coercive dimension of most typical initiation rites and ceremonies."<sup>46</sup> Thiessen insists that beyond Peters' claim that initiation presupposes that the initiate has freely chosen to be initiated, there are some real problems in describing paradigm cases of initiation as entirely voluntary. In typical "rites de passage" it is precisely the initiation process which transforms the immature adolescent into a responsible adult. The young adolescent did not choose to belong to his particular tribe.

Nor does he choose to be initiated to the particular customs to be adopted after initiation. Thiessen strongly canvasses that in analyzing the process of initiation rites and the concept of coercion we cannot deny that initiation is free of coercive elements. To substantiate his position, he cites White as saying "we are right to make him unfree now so as to give him as much autonomy as possible later on,"<sup>47</sup> and thereby concludes that we are forcing a curriculum on the child. As such a definition of indoctrination in terms of the use of coercion, shows that indoctrination is unavoidable in initiating children into public traditions. In concluding his argument he affirms that religion employs non-rational methods and that such inevitable use of non-rational methods in teaching religion and science should lead us to conclude that indoctrination is unavoidable. Hence, Thiessen argues that it is arbitrary to introduce a content criterion of indoctrination so as to exclude science from the dangers of indoctrination when it shares the very same non-rational features that characterize religion. Thiessen, following R.M. Hare opines that though a method such as non-evidential teaching is generally considered to be highly miseducative but such can be transformed into an acceptable teaching method simply by virtue of good intentions.

In confronting Thiessen's position, Kazepides argues that as a prerequisite to effecting conceptual refinements in educational theorizing or any philosophical activity for that matter, one is required to make a clear, coherent, and comprehensive conceptual framework that makes all the distinctions and connections the subject matter requires. In this wise, it will be arbitrary to make distinctions and connections that are far removed from the subject matter. He argues that the onus is on the person who attempts to change the ordinary language; though with all language imperfections, it still remains the foundation of all our thoughts. As such whoever wants to deviate must clearly defend such. Kazepides contends that language is too much a pattern of connections to fall before the mere voicing of a formula that isolates but one of its elements.

Kazepides leaning on Paul Komisar highlights some conditions that must be met before one begins to consider seriously programmatic definitions of important educational concepts. The conditions are that when someone: (1) proposes a change in the meaning of a term, (2) works out a full account of the application of this newly defined term in all kinds of situations, (3) traces out the effects of the change on related terms, and (4) divulges the advantages and disadvantages of the new way of speaking, then and only then will we call this a stipulative definition and lend the stipulator our ear.<sup>48</sup> Stipulative definition allows one to freely explore concepts beyond the descriptive

or dictionary meaning. Kazepides alleges Thiessen's conception and conflation of education to indoctrination of falling short of stipulative definition. Kazepides affirms that the distinction between education and indoctrination is required for the justification of the knowledge criterion of education and by our commitment to an open, liberal society. Kazepides insists that indoctrination violates the knowledge criterion of education and lays the foundations for closed, illiberal societies. He argues that the likes of Thiessen who wish to legitimize indoctrination, and especially religious indoctrination, commonly resort to systematic changes of the meanings of key terms in the ordinary language of education-the kind of change both Austin and Komisar consider unwarranted or arbitrary. Although people may try to change the meanings of words out of ignorance, confusion, or as a result of some pathological state of mind, but the changes which Thiessen attempted are intentional and usually employed to buttress weak arguments or to substitute for sound argument. The aim of such programmatic changes by Thiessen is strongly connected to religious dogma motivated by strong religious commitments.<sup>49</sup>

Thiessen, like many other scholars of education seeking to maintain traditional religious teaching in the schools, rejects the content criterion of indoctrination. He concludes with the claim that since science and religions have several similar non-rational features... [t]he resulting use of non-rational methods in teaching science and religions should lead us to conclude that indoctrination is unavoidable in both cases. Thiessen claims that it is arbitrary to introduce a content criterion of indoctrination so as to exclude science from the dangers of indoctrination when it shares the very same non-rational features that characterize religion<sup>50</sup> Thiessen, like other defenders of religious indoctrination, rejects the content criterion of indoctrination. Thiessen's arguments alters the meanings of key terms arbitrarily. There are numerous errors in Thiessen's paper. Kazepides in addressing this error related issues thrown up by Thiessen's paper concentrated on the latter's programmatic definition of "initiation," his acceptance of the method criterion of indoctrination and, more importantly, Thiessen's confusion of doctrines with the non-rational foundations of science and common sense. Thiessen according to Kazepides failed in his work to meet any of the conditions required for serious stipulative definitions.

Kazepides analysis was premised on the fact about the human condition. He argues that no one human being is born, as it were, at one's destination. No one emerges in the world as little thinking homunculi who can perform such intellectual acts as doubting, thanking, commanding, questioning, imagining, documenting, e.tc. Man

acquires these language games by participating in the ordinary activities of the human community within which he was born-not by education. Education, however, like any other high-level intellectual engagement has its prerequisite foundation; and the acquisition of this foundation is the result of primary socialization-not the result of education. This foundation is taught not by frantic ratiocination but by putting the young in our ways of doing things. Kazepides prefers to regard apprenticeship as the most appropriate model for teaching this foundational equipment to the young, not intricate and sophisticated rational engagement. The apprenticeship model puts severe restrictions both on the educator and the community. The educator must exhibit in his life all the virtues he intends to impart to the young, instead of merely paying lip service to some abstract principles. And the society must be a genuine moral and intellectual community where the various human excellences are regulative of its form of life.<sup>51</sup> The fundamental difference between the acquisition of the prerequisites of educational development/primary socialization and education proper, that is, the acquisition of worthwhile understanding may not be captured by one single word that characterizes this complex early transaction between the generations; one might call it teaching or training, facilitating or guiding, introducing or imparting, interacting or sharing, initiating or enculturating, or something else depending on the particular features of the situation and the conceptual finesse of the speaker or writer. We must not confuse it with the refined cognitive acts of educational engagements.

Kazepides explained that Peters' description of education as initiation into worthwhile activities connected with knowledge and understanding was intended "to draw attention to the enormous importance of the impersonal content and procedures which are enshrined in public traditions. Initiation is always into some body of knowledge and mode of conduct which takes time and determination to master"<sup>52</sup> Kazepides wonders why this conception will be blatantly misconstrued and misused by persons anxious to justify religious indoctrination. Kazepides accuses Hudson of being as guilty as Thiessen. Thiessen in his ploy to justify religious indoctrination elevated initiation to a "defining characteristic of education" or "a necessary condition of education"<sup>53</sup> and ignored the knowledge and value criteria of education. While Hudson's strategy was to relax the criteria of "education" so that it becomes indistinguishable from the hazy term "socialization"; "socialization" is an all-embracing, descriptive, sociological term that does not exclude indoctrination. Thiessen's approach is similar to Hudson's. He believes "the notion of initiation is very significant for education, and that

by focusing specifically on this notion we will come to better understand both education and indoctrination"<sup>54</sup> He believes that "initiation is of course not all there is to education, but it is one essential component of education"<sup>55</sup>

But since, according to Thiessen, "initiation entails indoctrination" because it involves the use of non-rational and even coercive methods, indoctrination "is unavoidable in the process of initiating individuals into the forms of knowledge"<sup>56</sup> This deliberate misconstrual indicates serious confusions. According to Kazepides, Peters choice of "initiating" over "teaching," "training," or other words in describing education, is that it is also an activity verb, but much more broader in scope. Peters, respecting the rules of ordinary language, repeatedly emphasized the fact that education is not an activity: For example one can say quite naturally that one spent the morning gardening or cooking, but it seems odd to say one spent it educating, or to say "Go and get on with your educating." "Educate" like "reform," "improve," "ameliorate" and other such words, seems to draw attention only to the standards to which the class of activities must conform and which give them their principle of unity.

Kazepides pointed out that Thiessen misrepresents Peters' views by claiming that "Peters himself describes education as an activity or a group of activities"<sup>57</sup>, or that "he admits that it [education] does refer to a range of processes or activities"<sup>58</sup> Kazepides insists that Peters analysis of the concept of education does not and could not legitimately maintain such views as bandied by Thiessen. What Peters maintained was that "Education, refers to no particular process; rather it encapsulates criteria to which any one of a family of processes must conform. Kazepides claims that "education" is not an activity word whereas "initiation" is. We can say that the initiation lasted three hours because it is an activity, but we cannot say that the education lasted three hours. Thiessen's counter-example: "Go and start your education," where "education" is supposed to suggest an activity, is unscrupulous. It is unscrupulous because such sentence does not reflect day to day way of talking. It is an awkward way of addressing people. That sentence suggests one should engage in activities that have educational value. Thiessen's adoption of the method criterion according to Kazepidez is mistaken and misleading because it makes indoctrination synonymous with the wider term miseducation.

Kazepides reaffirms that teaching methods are called indoctrinatory because they involve manipulating the subject matter, either in terms of failing to provide reasons, evidence, or justification of beliefs taught, or in terms of misusing the evidence in some

way. A second major emphasis running through the examples of methods of indoctrination involves manipulation of the subject, the student.<sup>59</sup> Kazepides A correct analysis of indoctrination should distinguish it not only from education but also from other miseducational activities such as propaganda, deception, coercion, and so on. Thiessen's definition fails to make these distinctions.

Kazepides identifies inculcation of doctrines, miseducational intentions and incompetency as some of the reasons some people resort to rationally questionable methods. He further explains that though indoctrination, like education, has a task and an achievement aspect, the talk about methods is relevant to the task aspect of indoctrination, it is completely irrelevant when we are considering the achievement aspect. The only criterion that is necessary and sufficient here is the doctrinal content to which the subjects are expected to commit themselves. Also, the proponents of the method criterion of indoctrination assume that being rational is simply thinking in a certain manner. But more importantly and in addition to thinking in a certain manner is thinking certain things. Therefore, looking at the nature of indoctrination, both from its etymological derivation to its common use in ordinary contexts, gives credence to Peters' view that "whatever else 'indoctrination' may mean it obviously has something to do with doctrines, which are a species of beliefs"<sup>60</sup> We indoctrinate people with, in, or into the beliefs of a particular church or mosque, while we do not indoctrinate them into non-rational methods. In this respect, "indoctrination" behaves more like "training" than "education"; just as "trained in" implies competence developed in a specific area, "indoctrinated in" implies commitment to a specific set of doctrinal beliefs. The original and proper home of doctrines is religion; we do not say that a person has been indoctrinated into the Yoruba language or into chemistry. Only in theological seminaries do people study and defend doctrines; in every other area of rational inquiry they are an anathema. The fact that "doctrine" is sometimes used to mean "theory" or "policy" does not present any problems-a lot of words in our language have variable meaning.

Kazepides finally classifies people's various ways of interpreting doctrines into two broad categories: the orthodox hard view and the figurative soft view. The orthodox or literal view of doctrines has the following features: (a) Doctrines are in principle unfalsifiable beliefs about the existence of beings, states of affairs or relationships. The doctrines of the infallibility of the Pope and of the triune nature of the Christian deity are examples of such doctrines. (b) Doctrines are criterion neither of rationality nor of irrationality. We do not consider believers or non-believers in the above doctrines as non-



rational or irrational. (c) Doctrines form a system of interrelated beliefs which constitutes an all-embracing, totalizing view encompassing every aspect of human life as subsidiary. (d) Although doctrines are descriptive statements, they have an overriding prescriptive function. (e) as the last point suggests, doctrines presuppose the existence of authorities or institutions which have the power to prescribe and uphold them. Without an institution that articulates, orders and defends its doctrines they are in danger of deteriorating into common prejudices, or being abandoned.<sup>61</sup> Although all doctrines within a doctrinal system meet conditions (a), (b) and (e), not all such doctrines may meet conditions (c) and (d). The reason is that not all doctrines are of equal importance to the system at all times-some of them may be idle and dead remnants of earlier ways of life and are preserved merely as parts of a tradition.

All paradigm cases of indoctrination involve doctrines that meet these criteria and all legitimate charges of indoctrination presuppose them. The charge of indoctrination, then, is legitimate only if one interprets doctrines literally. If, on the other hand, one uses doctrinal language metaphorically, it is no longer appropriate to talk of indoctrination but only of an expression of personal, subjective preferences. It is important to mention, however, that since such views are about subjective preferences there can be no legitimate place for them in educational institutions, unless they are taught as part of a course on comparative religion.

Following from Thiessen's argument, his basic aim as already identified by Kazepides was to make indoctrination an unavoidable element in the process of education. But this strategy fails because it will remain absurd to catch on the concept of initiation as used by Peters to reduce education to indoctrination. Taking a cue from Harry Schofield, the examination of the term initiation will shed light on the sense in which Peters uses the term. If we think of a youth in a primitive community being initiated into the tribe, we think of 'acceptance'. When the youth has reached a certain stage of development, he is accepted as an adult. As an outward sign of the recognition of his adulthood by the elders of the tribe, he passes through an initiation ceremony. From that time he enjoys all the privileges enjoyed by other adult members. This sense of initiation entails rites of acceptance. On most occasions the rites are performed in an enclosed and secretive atmosphere with religious coloration.

Whereas, initiation in the sense Peters has used it could be interpreted to mean 'exposed to' or 'committed to' to specific situation. All children are initiated, for example, into the skills of reading, writing, and counting. Not all children, however,

benefit equally from the initiation. Some children learn to read, write, and calculate better than others. The skills are the same for all those initiated, but all the initiates are not the same. Some are more intelligent than others; some are more emotionally stable, receive more parental encouragement, possess more determination, and are able to see more clearly the purpose of initiation. 'Initiation' in the sense of educating the young ones will transmute to indoctrination when coercion and indoctrination replaces education. Education unlike indoctrination must show respect for the individuality of learners. Hence, Peters' usage of initiation is symbolic. It represents all components of rational activities involved in bringing the young members to fit into the society and also able to contribute their quota in shapening the society and helping themselves in life.

### **1.5 Analysis of Teaching**

Related to the above is the concept of teaching which on many occasions is confused with concepts like indoctrinating, preaching. A case that closely comes to mind is one given by Bloom when he describes teaching as any interpersonal influence aimed at changing the ways in which other persons can or will behave. The restriction to "interpersonal" influence is intended to rule out physical (e.g., mechanical), physiological, or economic ways of influencing another's behavior, such as pushing him, drugging him, or depriving him of a job. Rather the influence has to impinge on the other person through his perceptual and cognitive processes, i.e., through his ways of getting meaning out of the objects and events that his senses make him aware of. The behavior producing the influence on another person may be "frozen" (so to speak) in the form of printed material, film, or the program of a teaching machine, but it is considered behavior nonetheless. How the other person "can or will behave" refers to his capabilities for maximum performance, i.e., abilities, or to his modes of typical performance, i.e., habits or attitudes, that constitute the objectives of instruction. The behaviors and intervening variables mediating them (such as abilities, habits, or attitudes) may be classified in many ways, such as the "cognitive," "affective," and "psychomotor" domains of the Taxonomy of Educational Objectives.<sup>62</sup>

The above definition does not separate teaching from, say, indoctrination. In the first instance the defining elements of 'cognitive abilities' and 'instructional objectives' included in the definition do not avail it of what teaching is. For to say that we are teaching (and not indoctrinating) when we pursue instructional objectives, is to be circular in our position. What makes them instructional objectives? The idea of cognitive

abilities serves no better since one person can influence the performance potential of another by engaging the latter's cognitive gears, and yet the influence can be a form of non-teaching. For the point of difference between teaching and indoctrination is how we engage the cognitive factors, not that we do this. (b) The attempt to restrict the kind of influence involved in teaching, by excluding "physiological, or economic ways . . ." avoids danger by avoiding the area of combat. For no one imagined that economic pressure could be confused with teaching. A definition must show how teaching is distinct from those related concepts like counselling, preaching, and advising. (c) This definition confronts the serious question of what to say about films, "teaching machines," etc. I take it, however, that it is now a genuine choice whether we want to say that we teach with a film or the film teaches: an adequate definition will have to protect the borderline status of this issue. (d) there is the well known duty of a definition to use definiens that clarify the definiendum.<sup>63</sup> We may then push for other approaches to sort the issue of what exactly 'teaching is.

Paul Komisar in his attempt to define teaching approaches it from the angle of conceptual analysis of teaching by setting teaching off from indoctrinating, propagandizing, insinuating, arguing, inspiring, preaching, haranguing, and other activities with which teaching has some linguistic closeness. In doing this, Komisar seeks that the following criteria serve as guide in our attempts at defining teaching.

1. The first criteria he tagged R-1. stipulating that the first duty imposed on a conceptual analysis of teaching is to set teaching off from indoctrinating, propagandizing, insinuating, arguing, inspiring, preaching, haranguing, and other activities with which teaching has some linguistic relationship. Though teaching may be said to fall into the same language category as do other terms, but a definition which gives 'teaching' proper application to instances of entertainment is seen as an unfit.

2. The second criteria, R-2. seeks for the fact that correct application of 'teaching X' neither implies nor presupposes the learning of X by the students being taught. This requirement does not deny other connections between teaching and learning. The two concepts may very well be related in other ways. One way to deny that Jones is teaching X to the students now, is to show that the students have already learned X. This is because teaching suggests the attempt to establish some learning (i.e., it connotes new achievement).<sup>64</sup> But it appears to be an obvious and indisputable fact about the concept of teaching that we can truthfully say 'Jones is teaching X' though his students do not come to learn X.

Giving the above difficulty, it appears reasonable to include additional requirements on any account of the concept of teaching. It is suggested that one likely way to go about R-2 is to make 'intention to produce learning' part of the definition of 'teaching.' But it could still be argued that it is possible that intentions may or may not be realized. It does succeed in excluding (1) activities whose learning-type effects are not intended (e.g. the unwitting influence of one person on another), and (2) activities, which while intending to affect an audience, are not designed to be productive of learning (e.g. acts of entertainment which aim to give but a moment's relief). But what of preaching, which seems to intend, through inspiration or fear, to have the hearers adopt an "attitude" or some other species of action-policy.

3. Similarly with indoctrinating and insinuating; they aim also to produce changes in people of the quasi-permanent sort which can with justice be called learning.' So the definition: 'activity intended to produce learning' applies too generously, and we fail to satisfy R -1. Some likely ways Komisar attempted repairing the situation is by dropping intention altogether and define 'teaching' as a performance conducted wholly in accord with certain rules. On this view, one is engaged in teaching because one is following out certain set procedures, not because one has a distinctive intention to produce learning. B. Or we can retain the notion of intention: 1. And retain learning as the aim, but add other criteria to regulate the special activity of teaching and distinguish it from other performance. 2. Or we can change the intention from producing learning to such other products as understanding, reasoned belief, etc. Komisar however concluded that only B-2 which offers attractive lead.<sup>65</sup>

4. Attempt at defining teaching as Rule-Following. One strong point in favour of rule-following approach is that it demolishes our inclinations to blur the differences between teaching and related activities like counselling. Teaching turns out to be an activity in which one is following a distinctive set of rules or procedures; and teaching, then, becomes as distinct an activity as the rules being followed are unique. This approach offers an advantage in which it seems to release us from the depressing task of stating what the aims of teaching are. For it appears that we determine whether Jones is teaching, not by combing the forest of his psyche, but by asking what rule he is following (or what procedure he is carrying out). Now this would provide a freshening wind in education, for we have but to allow talk about teachers' aims and this is taken as condoning reference to such things as "developing the individual," "fostering creative growth," and "preparing for wise decisions." Now if we identify 'intention to produce

learning' as a defining criterion of teaching, then it commits us to such undisciplined, queer talk as this, then our course is clear. It is to abolish the intentional element from our definition. But we shall have to find another way of rejecting such; for the discomfiting point is that we do not really relinquish the notion of end-chasing in a rule following conception of teaching.

The point about an activity so conceived is that the aims are achieved in fulfilling the rules (as against a non-rule-bound activity in which fulfilling the rules is only part of the story in achieving one's aims). And this distinction puts to track the rule-bound approach. For as regards teaching, we can say of Jones that he has taught, though he ignored or even contradicted any given set of rules or customary procedures, so long as he has produced learning of the proper sort (or achieved whatever other aim we may think relevant to teaching). That is, we must allow for the case wherein a teacher uses unconventional or otherwise original procedures to achieve a result we recognize as a proper end of teaching. Once we allow cases like this, we admit that something other than rule-following defines what it means 'to teach.'<sup>166</sup>

From the analysis above, one can see the difficulty involved in trying to sort and differentiate between teaching and other terms that are often confused or attached to teaching as code. However, one can pick reasonably from the analysis to fairly describe teaching. Teaching is instantiated as a deliberate, conscious act of disseminating certain bits of knowledge content on the targeted learners. Teaching is the conveyor of worthwhile knowledge content with the hope of helping learners to attain understanding and some sort of cognitive perspectives which is not inert. Teaching by its nature implies a deliberate efforts at helping or guiding people to attain knowledge, understanding, skills and right attitude. Teaching by its nature is dialogical; wherein there is an active involvement on both the two parties involved in the knowledge transaction. There is always an open channel to double check on the knowledge content to ascertain truth. Again, teaching must show respect for individuality of learners by allowing individual to absorb, process and react to content of discourse.

Closely related concept is learning. It is majorly presumed to be a direct or indirect effect of teaching. Like teaching, learning is a conscious and intentional in nature. Learning requires that the learner is prepared to receive what the teacher intends to pass across with the possibility of appropriating this content for the purpose of modifying his behaviour. Given the connection between learning and teaching, one can

clearly see that education is wider in scope than learning and of course teaching.

Another related concept in education is training. Often, training is confused with education. However, some adjectives commonly used to qualify training helps reveal that it is narrower in nature than education. These adjectives sometimes imply “physical elements” and at other time “mental elements”. We use it in cases like “physical training”, “Military training” both has physical emphasis in terms of activity which exercised the muscles of the body and kept us fit. Training is also used when talking about “mental training” to mean “regimentation of the mind” just as military training means regimentation and disciplining of the body. So, training can be described as the process of imparting some skills of manipulations to an individual in order to perform some set of operations in a regimented manner. From this description, two ideas emerge. The term ‘training implies ‘exercising’ and ‘repetition’, and in every case considered, training has been for something. There is in each case a definite end or purpose in view. We do not merely train’; we ‘train for’. Physical and mental training provide the most obvious examples of training involving exercise. The one former exercises the muscles regularly, the latter exercises the faculties of the mind regularly. To improve the memory, you exercised the ‘memory faculty’, by giving children large amounts of material to learn by heart (rote learning). To train the ‘reasoning faculty, you taught children, a difficult logical subject, which was frequently Latin. Those who have studied Latin will no doubt appreciate that there is a large element of memorizing and exercising in Latin, especially when it is badly taught. Training involves impartation of skill to perform some operation or set of operations whether mental or physical, and whether the acquisition of the skill is or is not accompanied by understanding of the principles on which the operation depends. Hence, training does not necessarily involve understanding the principles involved. In his discussion Schofield draws a close connection between training, instruction and drill. Training is always ‘training for’ something, and drill also means formation of habits through regular practice of stereotyped exercises. This is evident in the army and some other para-military outfit. In the army, the ‘drill instructors’ march platoons of men up and down the parade ground, bawling commands at them.

Drill therefore may be an essential element of training. A skill may begin at the level of drill and often end at the level of application. Consequently, both training and drill entail repetition. Drill involves repetition of simple movements or mental operations which result in habits. Training involves the repeated application of skills which have

been learned. The skills are not always applied automatically. They require intelligence to be brought to bear on situation.

Schofield quoting Plato, considers the likely relationship between ‘education’ and ‘training’. As to the difference, education is equated with ‘true knowledge’, not with opinion. In Plato’s ideal society, Plato considers the Guardian, the ruling class, the only people within the society as having the capacity to of acquiring ‘true knowledge while the ‘artisans’ were only capable of acquiring only knacks or skills. It might however be argued that Plato’s Guardian had vocational training and not education giving the claim that they were trained ‘to fit them to rule’. It was therefore as much vocational as the training in techniques and skills which the artisans received. But could this position be sustained? I doubt. If the Guardians received vocational training, it is essential that there be a knack or skill of ‘governing’ but one finds out that governing is not just skill or knack. It requires ‘cognitive perspective’ or what is referred to by Schofield as ‘synoptic or speculative role’ of philosophy. It requires a knowledge of principles and the understanding of human nature. Ethics and morals enter into it; right and wrong are of paramount importance. One must understand and appreciate beliefs and the reasons for the acceptance of those beliefs. So, we can submit that what the Guardians received was education and not training.<sup>67</sup>

## **1.6 Education and the Problem of Performativity**

Having considered the idea of education and some critical concepts associated with it, we shall quickly examine an ever-increasing emphasis upon the technical and instrumental aspect related to education and skill development. This instrumental reading of education according to Rumberger is to meet the perceived challenges of globalization and economic utility. That is, education is conceived as training for job specific attributes and is taken to be grounded in the arena of the competitive globalized market.<sup>68</sup>

The ‘value’ – or more accurately the ‘effectiveness’ – of education or of university research for example, can be reduced only to its relevance and usefulness “to the national economy”<sup>69</sup> Lyotard has predicted much of this through his notion of ‘performativity’<sup>70</sup>. The implication of this for education is that its own ‘relevance’ is to be determined by how it specifically fulfills the needs of the social system, which can be essentially reduced to the global economic system.<sup>71</sup> These ‘needs’ of society include the ‘production’ of specialized experts who can “tackle world competition” and the training

of skilled personnel necessary to maintain the “internal cohesion”<sup>72</sup> of society. These skilled practitioners are to be valued exclusively for their pragmatic roles rather than for the potential emancipator influence for society that they were once formerly presumed to have as in their role as the educated elite.

In certain contexts, humanity is being valued only in economic terms, either as market labour or as ‘human capital’. This tendency can be seen to be occurring to such an extent that ‘large segments of the population everywhere are becoming irrelevant’<sup>73</sup> The key ingredients for surviving in this rapidly changing, highly technological and information rich global market appear to be competitiveness and profitability, both of which determine technological innovation and productive growth.<sup>74</sup> Consequently education has been argued to be a “key to future economic prosperity”<sup>75</sup>. A tight relation between education and work is needed to ensure economic prosperity, but such a close and linear relation may result in the subordination of education to ‘performativity’. We have witnessed both education and training occurring concurrently within our schooling systems, although it would now appear that certain educative aspects are becoming marginalized.<sup>76</sup>

The dominance of economic interests over general or ‘liberal’ educational programmes is already becoming evident. The impact upon our national schooling systems as a result of prioritizing the ‘needs’ of society as Lyotard described, over the needs of individuals to becoming more fully human, is likely to be immense, as the whole notion of education is not only being compromised but is now under threat due to the ever-increasing demand for *training*. Here in Nigeria, the emphasis of government on education and training, appear to indicate that the enterprise of education is becoming dominated by technological and economic imperatives. Blake argued that there is a “tranquilized acceptance” of the technological approach where “effectiveness is rather the most nihilistic value”.<sup>77</sup>

## **1.7 Conclusion**

To conclude then, for a process of learning to be considered as educational, it must involve more than just skills development or training, the mental and emotional dispositions of learners, including their intentions, are to be engaged. In order for a process of learning to be educational, it must promote thoughtful responses and critical awareness amongst learners. Processes that foster a lack of critical awareness may, according to the previous arguments by Rodger and Robinson, be considered as



indoctrinatory. Worthwhile Education is more than just processes (e.g. experimentation) and products (e.g. the skill of critical thinking). For R.S. Peters education includes the setting of criteria or standards that are worthwhile. He argues that what makes humankind unique is the mind and that through educative development there should be a “change for the better”.<sup>78</sup> He argues that becoming educated in a worthwhile manner implies “(a) caring about what is worth-while and (b) being brought to care about it and to process the relevant knowledge or skill in a way that involves at least a minimum of understanding and voluntariness”.<sup>79</sup> His criterion of being ‘worthwhile’ “depends upon its contribution to the development of persons that permit them to live well.

Unfortunately, the central focus of education now becomes the cognitive development or academic excellence of students for instrumental purposes to the utter neglect of the moral domain. This reminds us of the popular ‘3R’ where emphasis was placed on reading, writing and arithmetic to the exclusion of affective whereas, education has to take cognizance of all its cardinal components. In essence, education implies the transmission of knowledge, values, norms and other cultural imperatives to the young generation or new members for the benefit of making the recipients become useful to himself, his society and also for the perpetuation of the society. It is a binding duty of the society to transmit its cultural heritage to the next one so as to ensure its perpetuation. This intergenerational transmission of cultural heritage is in fact the primary meaning of education. Again, such transmission forbids intentional suppression of the recipient voluntariness and wittingness. According to Obanya, transformation of Africa should not lose sight of the deep roots of education by being seriously anchored on the people’s culture so that we do not make the people extinct by destroying their culture.<sup>80</sup> The point we are making is that a functional education extends beyond being competent in a field of study or in a trade but in addition a familiarity with the environment in terms of norms and values that sustain interrelationship within the society and beyond. The emphasis on teaching moral values is crucial because it sustains not only intrapersonal, interpersonal relationships but also plays a role in sustaining political, economic, scientific and technological practices. Moral values are cultural construction though changing at peripheral level over time and varying minimally from culture to culture. As Clive Beck will argue, morality or moral values are human creations in accordance with their varied interests, traditions, and circumstances.<sup>81</sup>

To become educated is to learn to become a person. A person is a material object with 'a form of consciousness' and 'some set of concepts through which experience is ordered and made sense of. Persons possess 'intentionality'. They also possess the concept of a person which makes possible moral relations and self-understanding. Human beings have to become persons to differ from other lower animals. Personhood in recent times has been used to refer to educating a *whole* person and is contrasted with a uni-dimensional approach such as purely knowledge acquisition or cognitive development of the mind. Buber argued, "Education worthy of the name is essentially education of character", of "always the person as a whole"<sup>82</sup>. The enterprise of educating a person depends upon having a worthwhile notion of personhood. It is in this sense that Aristotle's discourse of education becomes germane. Aristotle did blend and emphasise intellectual and moral dimension of education as crucial to human excellence and by extension, he recognises the place of culture in his moral articulation. In his words,

Having then in regard to this subject established its essential that everybody able to live according to his own purposive choice should set before him some object for noble living to aim at"—either honour or else glory or wealth or culture on which he keeps his eyes fixed in all his conduct (since clearly it is a mark of much folly not to have one's life regulated with regard to some end), it is therefore most necessary first to decide within oneself, neither hastily nor carelessly, in which of the things that belong to us the good life consists, and what are the indispensable conditions for men's possessing it.<sup>83</sup>

Aristotle argues that leading the good life involves following the cultural traditions and speaking the language of their own culture or ethnic group. He even accuses Phaleas of neglecting the role of culture and moral education in securing justice and peace.<sup>84</sup> W. M. Wunning in his article "*The Politics of Aristotle*" opines and of course in corroboration of Aristotle's emphasises on culture that the true end of the state, as for the individual, is the best life which lies in the pursuit of virtue, rather than of power or wealth. As there is nothing noble or exalted in the ruling of slaves by an individual, so there is nothing noble or exalted in the exercise of despotic dominion by a state.' Conquest, therefore, through aggressive war is not to be recognized as an end to be kept in view by the philosophic legislator. A peaceful career, devoted to self-perfection, through the harmonious and unceasing activity of all the elements of political and social organization, is the true ideal, and that which involves complete happiness for both state and people. The realization of this ideal depends partly upon external conditions, which

must be more or less determined by chance, but to a far greater extent upon the character and culture of the people.<sup>85</sup>

Again, Aristotle in his seminal formulation of the philosophical view of intrinsic value in education argues that intellectual virtue is crucial to eudaimonia:

We should be able, not only to work well, but to use leisure well... But leisure of itself gives pleasure and happiness and enjoyment of life... the pleasure of the best man is the best, and springs from the noblest sources. It is clear then that there are branches of learning and education which we must study merely with a view to leisure spent in intellectual activity, and these are to be valued for their own sake.<sup>86</sup>

Aristotle contends that our ultimate purpose or goal in life is essentially to reach *eudaimonia*, (happiness/goodness) “If happiness is an activity in accordance with virtue, it would reasonably be the best activity, which would be the activity of the best part”<sup>87</sup> but to do so requires our ability to function properly in our thoughts and actions according to our sense of reason and our innate understanding of moral virtues. This is possible when we use principles of both the *intellectual* (taught or learned) and *moral virtue* (which becomes habit upon practice and imitation). Aristotle further posits that we must learn to make decisions that are right and just—not necessarily for our own personal benefit, but simply because we possess an understanding that something is the right course of action.

Aristotle insists that without having these two aspects work in unison the theory of moral virtue is incomplete and impossible. In short, it is our intellectual understanding of virtue that allows us to perceive what is right while our moral virtue aids us in carrying out what we know to be the correct and just course of action and these two parts of our concept of virtue lead to what Aristotle calls the “moral theory of virtue” as it is a combination of these parts. In his words:

This is why choice cannot exist without reason and intellect or without a moral state; for good action and its opposite cannot exist without a combination of intellect and character.<sup>88</sup>

In this wise, the educational curriculum is a specific area that comes to mind in any consideration of how the moral virtues may best be developed in schools. In his article, ‘On the contribution of literature and the arts to the educational cultivation of moral virtue, feeling and emotion,’ David Carr examines the connections between a

number of claims concerning education in general and moral education in particular. He makes a convincing case on four fronts: education is about broad cultural initiation rather than narrow academic or vocational training; he recommends an education that has a prime concern with the moral dimension of personal development; emotional growth has an important role in such moral formation; literature and other arts have an important part to play in any education of feelings. In respect of the last claim, Carr argues that:

[W]hat is needed for a clear view of the moral educational relevance of literature and the arts is a conception of moral education that does justice to the interplay between the cognitive and the affective in moral life, and that a non-relativist Aristotelian ethics of virtue holds out the best prospect for such a moral education of reason and feeling.<sup>89</sup>

In essence, a worthwhile education is the one which factors in all the domains relevant to it. It is in line with this that S.J. Cooney asserts thus:

What we need today are not merely literate leaders and citizens. Goodness knows we are not short of graduates of all kinds. We have them everywhere. What we require are men and women who have moral stature, and whose actions are based on noble principles. An all-round education, including character education, will broaden the mind of our young citizens, and produce truly patriotic Nigerians who will ensure that in future, characteristics like personal greed, tribalism, ethnicity, bribery and corruption, and intolerance will be dethroned. Then we can hope to build a genuinely great Nigeria respected by other countries and not merely tolerated as we are today.<sup>90</sup>

From the above we can deduce that an all-round education entails both intellectual and moral development and an attempt to articulate such can be garnered from Aristotle's Ethics. Aristotle examines the connections of intellectual virtues and moral virtues and asserts that "goodness has two forms, moral virtue and intellectual excellence; for we praise not only the just but also the intelligent and the wise. For we assumed that what is praiseworthy is either goodness or its work, and these are not activities but possess activities."<sup>91</sup>

We will return to this later as we build our thesis to show that intellectual excellence requires a robust moral stature to make a good education. Such is urgently needed in our educational system to forestall the current moral deficits experienced in our schools and the society at large.

The above discourse is quite germane to our overall thesis, which is Aristotle's perspective on virtue and education. We see the discussion of education and its 'aims' as both vital and central to the overall goal of the thesis. And having established that the discourse of nature and aims of education is vital to the practice of education, we are here to mention that the current understanding and usage of education in the liberal state and Nigerian educational system rest heavily on skill acquisition, certification cum individualism without adequate attention to the moral aspect as cardinal aim is faulty. This becomes more evident giving the current research into education which often focuses narrowly upon more specific issues such as learning, teaching, leadership, management, social equity, identity formation, curriculum design and delivery. It would appear that the significance of such issues for 'education' is self-evident. However, it is contended here that the concept of 'education' is being sapped of its moral significance to the extent of becoming absent altogether from research that is presumably examining this discipline, due to the almost exclusive emphasis being given to such particular issues as those listed above.

Gould emphasises this point when he insists that the school as a significant mechanism in the conduct of the business of education in the contemporary time is by its very nature an ethically committed institution and by implication cannot avoid discussion of moral issue. Gould avers that the school is continuously involved in the selection of significant subject matter, the selection of appropriate modes of instruction, the determination of good educational objectives, the identification and reward of outstanding teachers all rest on some value base. By implication, it becomes incumbent that our schools must address the all important ethical and moral issues which have hitherto continue to be implicit. Moral issues are to become subject of intelligent deliberation by both students and teachers alike. It is also significant, given the moral problems and associated vices confronting the educational system and the society at large. Having established the connection of education to development of moral virtues through moral education that is erected on human reason, we shall proceed to the next chapter to examine with the intent to debunk the erroneous assumption that religion stands as the foundational basis for moral education.

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## CHAPTER TWO

# Concepts of Moral Education and Religious Instruction

## 2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we shall attempt to examine conceptual issues around moral education and religious instruction with the aim of clarifying differences and possible overlaps between these concepts and also to ensure a sound model of moral education, which of necessity must have a sound theory of morality in terms of which moral education objectives can be formulated. As such, the first task is to make clear the nature of religion and religious instruction. Then, morality and by extension, moral education. Of course, this is no easy task but it must be done if we are to achieve our goal.

## Morality and Religion

### 2.2 The meaning of morality

The search for the basis on which to define morality has, without doubt, been a daunting task for the moral philosophers. Most of the familiar grounds on which this age-old issue had been discussed have come under vigorous attack in the hands of moral theorists themselves, such that one cannot but wonder about the right place to start and, in fact, how to proceed. This sense of loss is even more forcefully felt owing to the fact that the very necessity of morality and ethics is now being questioned more than ever before.<sup>1</sup> For instance, the naturalistic temper of contemporary inquiry has tended to take metaphysical considerations out of moral discourse. According to Robert P. Burns:

The potential unavailability of metaphysical foundations raises a question of how one who wishes to give an account of morality in our age should proceed. Must he first accept the end of the metaphysical era, the unavailability of the old foundations, and then start over, providing a new understanding of morals and politics either by refounding morality in the contemporary selection of terms or abandoning foundations altogether? ... Alternatively, is metaphysics ... indispensable to morality? Rather than give up on the discarded language of metaphysics, must the would-be moralist struggle to recover it?<sup>2</sup>

This state of affairs notwithstanding, it seems that moral inquiry somehow requires grounding. Whatever definition of morality given depends on who is giving it, as well as the position he or she seeks to defend. The confusion often encountered in the discussion of what morality is may be resolved by understanding the difference that lies

between what a person thinks is moral and what morality actually is. This confusion is, apparently, responsible for the view of some moral theorists that morality is purely relative.<sup>3</sup> Yet, a description of someone's moral beliefs or a contrast of one person's moral beliefs with another's is not an answer to the question of what morality essentially is, even though different beliefs may be given as examples. It would be, instead, an answer to the question, "What do you (or some other persons) think is moral?"

Be that as it may, one possible way to approach the question of what morality is, perhaps, by concentrating, as Emmett Barcalow<sup>4</sup> has done, on the essential question: "What makes a thing a moral issue?" As we shall show presently, an important feature of morality is that it serves as a guide to action. It is a practical phenomenon in which decisions are made by the moral agent concerning the right way to approach crucial issues of life. Because of this, moral decisions concern those human actions involving responsibility and choice. It is when people have possible alternatives to their actions that we can judge those actions as either (morally) good or bad.<sup>5</sup> Since moral issues concern both behaviour and character, they arise whenever life presents us with problems of choice of action in given situations, especially where other people are involved.<sup>6</sup> But it may be asked: Is every form of choice or decision-making necessarily of a moral nature?

For example, imagine that a man needs to decide which of two different shirts to buy. He could decide to buy either of them, or even both of them, so long as he can afford them. Apart from some casual remarks which may be made about colour preferences, his choices, strictly speaking, do not affect anyone's well-being in any (morally) significant way. Again, imagine that one has to choose which of three cities to relocate to. Whatever choice one makes would be based purely on personal considerations and not necessarily on someone else's moral approval or disapproval. In the same vein, decisions about whether to drink tea or coffee, whether to go to the movie or attend a concert, whether to watch television or simply listen to the radio, etc., ordinarily raise no moral issues.<sup>7</sup>

On the other hand, decisions about whether to deal on drugs for pecuniary gains, cause or start a fight in a bar or street, drive while intoxicated, appropriate another person's property without his/her consent, etc., do indeed raise moral issues. A boy's decision to rape a girl or beat her up, to cheat in an examination, to mislead others by a well crafted falsehood, etc., all definitely raise moral problems. In what way, then, can one distinguish between moral and non-moral issues? What gives moral character to an ordinary issue?

Whether I buy a pink shirt or purple one, relocate to London or Abuja, drink coffee or water, go to the cinema or watch movies, etc., does not affect any other person's well-being in itself. Ordinarily, none of these alternatives constitutes a threat or harm to any other person's or group of persons' well-being, unless a different circumstance, of a different nature, is introduced. For instance, the blue or red shirt may be preferred because it is a mark of membership of some occult group; one is relocating to Lagos in order to abandon his wife and children for another woman. Apart from these built in considerations, none of the choices necessarily benefits nor harms other persons. Therefore, they cannot be said to raise any moral concerns in themselves. On the other hand, a boy's decision to rape or beat up a girl, instead of protecting her, to sell drugs, or fake a company's products to make money; his preference for a lie instead of the truth, etc., are all states of affairs that would affect someone's well-being. Therefore, they are moral issues.<sup>8</sup>

As Barcalow argues, the well-being of the moral agent—the person who is under a moral circumstance—is also important in morality. Clearly, a person stranded, say in an island, or simply frustrated, may have to decide between committing suicide and continuing to struggle for life against all odds. Another person who has a special talent or ability may have to choose between actualising his potentials in the right and useful direction and spending his time unprofitably. Thus, Barcalow concludes, once anyone's well-being is enhanced or diminished in an issue or a state of affairs, that issue or a state of affairs automatically translates into a moral one.<sup>9</sup> One can then say that moral issues arise ultimately or most fundamentally when the choices people face will definitely or, at least, likely affect the well-being of anyone, whether in the person of the moral agent or that of others, by decreasing or increasing it.<sup>10</sup>

Another way to look at morality (both as a phenomenon and as a concept) is by examining the tacit distinction usually drawn between it and ethics. Morality and ethics are terms which have often been employed synonymously. However, there seems to be a distinction, albeit, a tacit one, between them. This distinction is very important to us because a philosopher has to be precise in his or her use of words, and cannot be content with only their ordinary use. This is due to the nature of the philosophical enterprise itself, in which making ideas stand out as clearly as possible is of paramount importance. Besides, concepts are the philosopher's primary tool, as he or she has no laboratory as does the natural scientist, for instance.<sup>11</sup>

Properly defined, morality refers to the acceptable standards of behaviour, or conduct, within a group or a society, while ethics refers to the formal or systematic attempt to understand the nature of morality.<sup>12</sup> For this reason, philosophical ethics is also often referred to as “moral philosophy,” i.e., a philosophical study of moral issues and ideas in general, and human morality in particular. But morality is antecedent to ethics in that it denotes those concrete activities of which ethics is the science. For if moral problems did not arise from how people actually live in society, from their expectations and failures, the ethicist would probably have no subject matter of much interest to work on. Thus, morality seems somewhat confined in the realm of practice, while ethics is largely theoretical. To this end, when philosophers say that someone is morally good, they usually mean to say that the individual's actions are commendable or praiseworthy.<sup>13</sup>

On the other hand, philosophers do not ordinarily say that a person is an ethically good person; rather, they say that a person is a good ethicist, meaning that the person's theories about morality are well articulated and, so, are worthy of serious consideration.<sup>14</sup> Thus, the interest of the ethicist is basically theoretical: he is trying to understand the basic principles of a given subject matter of morality. But the interest of the moralist is purely practical, in that he tries to help people become better human beings by caring about others. From this point of view, the biblical Jesus can be taken as a typical moralist.

In other words, while ethics is more or less a generic term for various ways of understanding and examining the moral life, in its most familiar sense, morality refers to norms about right and wrong human conduct which, because they are widely shared, have become stable constructs and, therefore, conventions.<sup>15</sup> Hence, the philosophers' tendency to analyse the morality of human conduct against the backdrop of the ideal moral standard. This idea of the ideal standard governing our free actions is sometimes considered to essentially relate to the human race. Although there are widely divergent theories of morality and ethics, there seems to be agreement among humans in some fundamental areas of public morality.

Reasoning about morality, like other forms of reasoning, involves some degree of mental activity. Some moral issues do not appear to us as problems at all, because we have been biologically and socially conditioned to apply certain straightforward rules in resolving them<sup>16</sup> For example, most peoples of the world consider it morally wrong, even intrinsically evil, to kill the innocent. But, in some other cases, moral problems are not

amenable to such straightforward solutions, but may require careful, rigorous probing to understand all the facts surrounding a given moral issue. For instance, there is considerable disagreement among ethicists concerning such ethically interesting issues as abortion, pornography, euthanasia, sex outside of marriage, human cloning,<sup>17</sup> and the ongoing human embryo stem cell research,<sup>18</sup> etc. Hence, the fact that people face moral problems and/or disagreements is evidence that moral discourse often involves a decision procedure in order to decide on the appropriate moral action. This connection is necessitated by the fact that whatever our disagreements are about, and however intense they may appear to be, we need to get on, not only with the business of living, but also doing so together, and meaningfully.

This consideration seems to suggest some parallel with what happens in an average research work. A researcher does not merely rely on his intuition to attain knowledge; rather, there is need for some underground investigation that will yield the necessary information about the subject matter. This is why a lot of time is spent in the library, and in peering into other information sources, in order to produce a well-researched work. In the same way, some aspects of human morality are hard to resolve without recourse to reasoning, and in fact, disputation. The solution to such moral situations is not always self-evident, but often requires some rigorous and patient search, because in morality, judgment and choice are antecedent to overt action. As John Dewey noted:

The practical meaning of the [moral] situation—that is to say the action needed to satisfy it—is not self-evident. It has to be searched for. There are conflicting desires and alternative apparent goods. What is needed is to find the right course of action, the right good<sup>19</sup>

In spite of these considerations, some frontline philosophers have tended to deny the connection between morality and reason, in such a way that leaves one wondering about how to make sense of the term, ‘moral reasoning’. In his *A Treatise of Human Nature*, David Hume, for instance, relying on the assumption that all thinking—including reasoning—is passive, argues as follows:

An active principle can never be founded on an inactive principle; and if reason be inactive, it must remain so in all its shapes and appearances, whether it exerts itself in natural or moral subjects<sup>20</sup>

Hume further argues that:

Since morals, therefore, have an influence on the actions and affections, it follows, that they cannot be deriv'd from reason; and that because reason alone ... can never have any such influence. Morals excite passions, and produce or prevent actions. Reason of itself is utterly impotent in this particular. The rules of morality, therefore, are not conclusions of our reason<sup>21</sup>

One would hardly agree with Hume's insinuations here, unless one realises that they are the ideas of a man who must maintain an empiricist viewpoint even when there is some evidence to the contrary. It seems rather difficult to sustain the contention that morality, even when it clearly includes the attempt to reason about it, is a passive phenomenon, in the Aristotelian sense,<sup>22</sup> in which casual thinking (i.e., free flow of thought) may sometimes be taken to be a passive experience or phenomenon. But how does one go about arguing for the contrary position?

It may, perhaps, not require a great deal of effort to understand how other forms of thinking or mental processes, such as imagining, regretting, remembering or reminiscing, reverie, depression, etc., can be regarded as passive, or as things which happen to the mind. The mind easily or effortlessly lapse into them. However, as Irving M. Copi and Carl Cohen aptly pointed out, every mental reasoning process is a species of thinking; but not all thinking is reasoning.<sup>23</sup> For instance, one can remember or imagine all the numbers between 1 and 10, without engaging in any kind of reflection on them, such as their mathematical implications, or their connections to one another (e.g.,  $2 \times 2 = 4$ ). On the other hand, reasoning is, in a special sense, just as a mathematical calculation, a form of activity, though, a mental one. It is something the mind does, because it is a special type of thinking in which problems are solved.<sup>24</sup>

This being the case, then, moral reasoning cannot be different, but equally involves the solving of problems. To a very considerable extent, human decisions about morality in this active sense often involves conscious and deliberative reasoning, in which people carefully consider the choices open to them. Thus, Hume's thesis that "moral distinctions ... are not the offspring of reason,"<sup>25</sup> which is based on his defective assumption that "Reason is wholly inactive, and can never be the source of so active a principle as conscience, or a sense of morals,"<sup>26</sup> poses the problem of how to distinguish between spontaneous moral actions, on the one hand, and those that require some deliberative thought and consultations. "Moral distinctions," it would seem, are also more

a product of reasoning—active reasoning, at that—than that of any other element Hume would readily grant. This seems so obvious that despite the high esteem in which Hume is held in contemporary philosophy, not many of his sympathizers seriously defend this position. Thus, William Frankena in his paper “The Concept of Morality,” summarises this critical point about morality by describing it as follows:

... [M]orality is and should be conceived as something ‘practical’ in Aristotle’s sense, i.e., as an activity, enterprise, institution, or system ... whose aim is not just to know, explain, or understand, but to guide and influence action, to regulate what people do or try to become or at least what oneself does or tries to be<sup>27</sup>

Morality is also the quality of being in accord with the standards of right or good conduct or a system of ideas that fall into those same categories. We often hear words about religious morality or the phrase, ‘Christian morality’ in society. Items that fall into the morally sound category are qualities like good, goodness, rightness, virtue, and righteousness. When talking about a moral quality involving a course of action, we think of ethics; and sometimes, a person would use the rules or habits with regard to right and wrong that he or she follows to define morality. Thus, morality might be regarded as a complex system of general principles and particular judgments based on cultural, religious, and philosophical conceptions and beliefs. Cultures and groups regulate and generalise these concepts, in order to effect the control of human behaviour. When someone conforms to the codification, he or she is considered to be moral. And when the person transgresses the codified standards of conduct, they are deemed immoral or morally inefficient. Yet, although the notion of how we ought to behave and the reality of how we do behave do not always coincide; it is widely believed that real morality obtains only when one’s conduct is in accordance with one’s perception of morality or the right principle of conduct. Moral ideals are only those that support good quality conduct, that is, those which render such conduct moral. And so a system of standards used to produce honest, decent, and ethical results is generally considered moral.

The question “What is morality?” has remained an issue in the history of thought. If one considers morality as a standard that has been set by a transcendent being, or God, then the issues involved in answering the question certainly introduce much more complicated problems to the one already confronting us. Consider Kant, for instance. Kant thought of God as existing in order for morality to have meaning. This is Kant’s perspective, although he has also been traditionally credited with the provision of the



rational standard for morality. However, if one argues that God has set the standard of morality and all we have to do is read the revealed texts and follow the commandments of God, then one faces Euthyphro's dilemma: Is an action moral because the gods decree it, or do the gods decree it because it is moral?<sup>28</sup> Although this question was posed by Socrates during the earliest stages of ethical thought, the issue which it has raised remains very much controversial, if not unresolved, today. Further, no matter which faith one professes and what revealed text he or she believes in, and what commandments he/she accepts as a result, such a person is subject to the critique that there are others who believe in a different type of God, different revelation, and different commandments.<sup>29</sup> In defence of such a religious view, it seems that intuition is the way one knows what is true. Kant also attempted to proffer the most sophisticated defence of this kind of intuition in his ethics.

In reality, the question of what morality is involves a whole lot more, since deontological theories are not the only ones that have emerged. We also have virtue ethics, which focuses on a person's character traits, such as that of Aristotle. We have utilitarian ethics, such as that of J. S. Mill, a more or less communitarian ethics is also deducible from Hume's moral thought. Since the issue of morality involves at least all four of these positions, any argument which advocates only one of the four theories would not be a complete answer to the question posed. It might also help the position of a person that believes in God and revelation to seek an in-depth understanding of Kant's moral philosophy since this is traditionally considered the best rational defence of that view, while Aquinas is considered the best defence from the Christian perspective, which is not strictly deontological.

However, virtue theory one of the oldest moral theory as typified in Aristotle's conception, on a careful consideration embodies the basics of all other three theories. In virtue ethics, the morality of actions is based on the character of the person; a virtuous person will naturally act ethically. It is not enough to do an act that benefits another or to act with altruistic purposes. The act must come from a good and virtuous character. And a good and righteous character comes from the deliberate practice of three core virtues viz: *Arete*, *Phronesis* and *Eudaimonia*. In essence, virtue theory is a combination of ethics of character and ethics of conduct. That is, the proper focus of ethics should be on people's characters rather than on their actions. Also, the theory emphasizes that the best way to know what one should do is to think of how to behave virtuously, rather than

thinking of how to follow a moral principle. By ethics of character, we mean deliberation on what is morally important is to be a particular kind of person, and to have developed the particular traits of character which are the moral virtues. According to Gerard Hughes, moral philosophy, in the estimation of virtue ethicists, might have been too long preoccupied with 'issues' and moral dilemmas. But the moral life is quite distorted if it is seen principally as problem solving or trying to deal with agonizing cases. In fact, experientially, what we normally focus upon in our friends or our children, or, for that matter, in people such that we find it hard to deal with, is their characters, the kind of people they are. And if asked how we thought of our own moral lives, we might much more naturally say that we would hope to be loyal, honest, generous, rather than say that we would hope to keep a set of rules, however admirable they might be, or to solve all kinds of difficult moral dilemmas.<sup>30</sup> Also, ethics of conduct touches on not just a question of how we might naturally think of living a morally good life. It is an epistemological claim about how we can best discover what living a good life requires of us. We discover what to do by thinking about generosity, or fidelity, or honesty or fairness rather than, say, by doing a utilitarian calculation, or applying a Kantian test. Underlying this epistemological fact, it might also be argued, that it is virtuous dispositions which give us the required moral perceptiveness, rather than some abstract set of principles to which we subscribe.<sup>31</sup> For Aristotle, questions of morality are not simply how to conduct oneself in life; they involve how one becomes the kind of person readily disposed to conduct oneself; how one can be counted on to act and feel a certain way; how one comes to originate characteristic conduct and emotion from a fixed position.<sup>32</sup>

Hence, Aristotle's theory of virtue presupposes that humans naturally possess the material of excellence and naturally develop toward it, but that they do not achieve it without guidance. Moral excellence is a hexis of the affective part of the soul which enables a person reliably to choose and perform actions according to reason. It is manifested in action and concerns the experience of *pathe* which are intentional and cognitive. The person who is morally excellent consistently performs acts which fulfil his function, acting according to reason.' In order to attain moral excellence, a person must be able to choose well, which requires intellectual excellence and unity among desires. The excellent person achieves harmony of thought and desire, which enables him to act consistently for the sake of the noble. Aristotle emphasizes the crucial place of both reason and emotions in his moral theory. In a bid to do this, he distinguishes between

moral and intellectual virtues, but he equally holds that no one is fully virtuous or has true moral virtue without having the intellectual virtue of practical wisdom, and he holds that no one can become practically wise without first possessing natural or habitual moral virtue. These interdependencies are grounded in the premise that human agents are a union of intellect and desire. These interdependencies between the intellectual and moral virtues are exceedingly important to Aristotle's theory of virtue and the human good. We will return to this in chapter four.

In the argument of religious origin of morality, we often think that if only people knew what we knew or became aware of something we knew that they would then think as we do. But people have all kinds of different starting positions, which often prevent such a consensus of opinion from ever occurring. The Bible turns out to offer no such set of guidelines, as circumstances sometimes seem to suggest. As a proof of this, there is a variety of religious groups that in all honesty and with their best intentions use the same text, but have historically developed different views that have been so significantly different as to even occasion wars.

Let us however hazard the question, "If There's No God"—Is religion necessary to the discovery of the specific moral rules that should guide us? And is a belief in the chief traditional doctrines of religion—such as the existence of a personal God, a life after death, a Heaven and a Hell—necessary in order to secure human observance of moral rules? The belief that morality is impossible without religion has dominated Nigeria education for over a century. Perhaps this erroneous thought is informed by the medium through which Western education came to us. It is on record that the missionaries pioneered western education in this part of the globe. And the first set of teachers was predominantly priests who used their churches as schools during the week days. Santayana satirizes the impression that morality and religion are synonymous thus: "It is a curious assumption of religious moralists that their precepts would never be adopted unless people were persuaded by external evidence that God had positively established them. Were it not for divine injunction and threats everyone would like nothing better than to kill and to steal and to bear false witness."<sup>33</sup>

John Stuart Mill also in his essay on "The Utility of Religion." begins by asserting that religion has always received excessive credit for maintaining morality because, whenever morality is formally taught, especially to children, it is almost invariably taught as religion.<sup>34</sup> Children are not taught to distinguish between the commands of God and

the commands of their parents. The major motive to morality, Mill argues, is the good opinion of our fellows. The threat of punishment for our sins in a here-after exercises only a dubious and uncertain force: "Even the worst malefactor is hardly able to think that any crime he has had it in his power to commit, any evil he can have inflicted in this short space of existence, can have deserved torture extending through an eternity."<sup>35</sup> In any case, "the value of religion as a supplement to human laws, a more cunning sort of police, an auxiliary to the thief-catcher and the hangman, is not that part of its claims which the more high minded of its votaries are fondest of insisting on."<sup>36</sup> There is a real evil, too, in ascribing a supernatural origin to the received maxims of morality. "That origin consecrates the whole of them, and protects them from being discussed or criticized."<sup>37</sup> The result is that the morality becomes "stereotyped"; it is not improved and perfected, and dubious precepts are preserved along with the noblest and most necessary. Mill maintains that

even the morality that men have achieved through the fear or the love of God, can also be achieved by those of us who seek, not only the approbation of those whom we respect, but the imagined approbation of all those, dead or living, whom we admire or venerate. . . .The thought that our dead parents or friends would have approved our conduct is a scarcely less powerful motive than the knowledge that our living ones do approve it..."<sup>38</sup>

On the other hand, the religions which deal in promises and threats regarding a future life fasten down the thoughts to the person's own posthumous interests; they tempt him to regard the performance of his duties to others mainly as a means to his own personal salvation; and are one of the most serious obstacles to the great purpose of moral culture, the strengthening of the unselfish and weakening of the selfish element in our nature. The habit of expecting to be rewarded in another life for our conduct in this world, makes even virtue itself no longer an exercise of the unselfish feelings.

Feuerbach in his work posits that God is a human projection resulting from the alienation of the human self and his historical and social activity. Man in his thought project God out of his imagination. Man unlike animal is an infinite consciousness<sup>39</sup>. Man has the power of thought for knowledge, power of will for the energy of character and power of heart for love. These constitute his absolute essence and the purpose of his existence. Feuerbach opines that man's imaginary creation of God in his thought now makes him object of his thought. The being created in his thought now dominates him.

He argues that to redeem man, the symptom of man's disorder consciousness must be changed. Man needs to be brought to know that such thought which create God is an illusion. Feuerbach's characterizations of Christianity as the basis of man's alienation and a phenomenon or consciousness which man must be made to realize as illusion and what to be jettisoned.<sup>40</sup>

Morris R. Cohen made more bitter indictment:

The absolute character of religious morality has made it emphasize the sanctions of fear—the terrifying consequences of disobedience. I do not wish to ignore the fact that the greatest religious teachers have laid more stress on the love of the good for its own sake. But in the latter respect they have not been different from such great philosophers as Democritus, Aristotle, or Spinoza, who regarded morality as its own reward. . . . Religion has made a virtue of cruelty. Bloody sacrifices of human beings to appease the gods fill the pages of history. In ancient Mexico we have the wholesale sacrifice of prisoners of war as a form of national cultus. In the ancient East we have the sacrifice of children to Moloch. Even the Greeks were not entirely free from this religious custom.... The doctrine of a loving and all-merciful God professed by Christianity or Islam has not prevented either one from preaching and practicing the duty to hate and persecute those who do not believe. Nay, it has not prevented fierce wars between diverse sects of these religions<sup>41</sup>

While some philosophers will not make virulent attack on religion, they have insisted that the language of religion is not open to non-believers. Wittgenstein in his *Philosophical Investigations* (1953) argues:

If language is to be a means of communication there must be agreement not only in definitions but also (queer as this may sound) in judgments. This seems to abolish logic, but does not do so. - It is one thing to describe methods of measurement, and another to obtain and state results of measurement. But what we call 'measuring' is partly determined by a certain constancy in results of measurement.<sup>42</sup>

Language comprises words and rules for the use of those words. Some rules, which I shall call logical criteria, connect words to other words; other rules, which I shall call experiential criteria, connect words to experiences. Becoming proficient in the use of language involves learning both logical and experiential criteria. But whereas one can learn logical criteria without being committed to the truth or falsity of any contingent propositions, one cannot learn experiential criteria without being so committed. Learning the experiential criteria for such terms as 'hot', 'red' and 'pain' necessarily involves

accepting the truth of certain contingent propositions of the form 'This is hot', 'That is red' and 'I am in pain'. Unless I accept that something is hot, and thus learn which experience the word 'hot' is associated with, I shall remain unable to establish the truth or falsity of any proposition which ascribes the property of heat.

According to Wittgenstein, language has no common essence, only 'similarities', 'relationship' as members of a family. Wittgenstein illustrates his argument with reference to the practice of measuring. All propositions which state the results of measurement are contingent; but agreement on the truth of some such propositions is necessary to fix units of measurement<sup>43</sup> There must be agreement on some measurements if the practice of measuring is to get off the ground. Earlier in the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein remarks on the curious status in language of the standard metre in Paris. It is clearly a contingent proposition that the standard metre in Paris is one metre long. It is a physical object and as such may be compressed, filed down or otherwise interfered with in such a way as to render the proposition that it is one metre long false. On the other hand, to deny that the standard metre in Paris is one metre long seems to put the whole business of measuring things in metres in jeopardy:

There is one thing of which one can say neither that it is one metre long, nor that it is not one metre long, and that is the standard metre in Paris. - But this is, of course, not to ascribe any extraordinary property to it, but only to mark its peculiar role in the language-game of measuring with a metre-rule . . . What looks as if it had to exist, is part of the language. It is a paradigm in our language-game; something with which comparison is made<sup>44</sup>

Before we can establish that anything is one metre long, we must first agree that something is. Agreement on the truth of at least one proposition of the form 'X is one metre long' is a necessary condition of the ability to test the truth of other propositions of the same form. Thus Wittgenstein shows that there must be agreement in judgments as well as agreement in definitions if propositions are to be informative, if there are to be publicly recognized procedures for distinguishing true propositions from false ones.

Hirst, proposes an extension of Wittgenstein's argument about propositions in general to an argument about epistemologically autonomous classes of propositions. Wittgenstein shows that understanding propositions presupposes agreement that certain propositions are true or false; Hirst adds that understanding propositions of a given epistemological type presupposes agreement that certain propositions of that type are true or false. If a form of knowledge is distinguished by a unique set of truth criteria, and

agreement in judgements is required to fix truth criteria, it follows that agreement in judgements is a necessary condition of understanding a form of knowledge. Assuming the validity of his first premise, this second interpretation of Hirst's premise that if religion is a logically unique form of knowledge, and understanding a logically unique form of knowledge involves accepting that certain propositions of that form are true or false, it is clear that religious understanding necessarily involves religious belief.<sup>45</sup>

For Wittgenstein, religious propositions do not mirror or picture facts in the world. Thus, they cannot be part of what we affirm or deny when we say that the world is a totality of facts. Though Wittgenstein unlike the logical positivists did not deny the existence imperceptible realities, but he was of the opinion that we cannot talk about them as we talk about empirical objects. To talk about religious propositions in such an empirical sense is to talk nonsense. Wittgenstein negation of religion is as a result of his concept of language. By virtue of his method, based on critique of language, Wittgenstein approach to religion according to Braismann is to be seen as “tool of new deictic or pointing metaphysics”<sup>46</sup> We can then infer that on the basis of Wittgenstein conception of Philosophy and language, that no representation of a supernatural or transcendent world is possible. That is, a positive, revealed religion with its cosmogony, prophesies and dogmas was basically unthinkable and hence, unsayable.

Wittgenstein insists that religious propositions are mainly concerned with transcendental dimensions of our world, while our world reminds us that there is no world outside of logic. He admits that religious propositions comply with the rules of language, however, we will discover on a closer look, they say nothing. Rather, they are pseudo statements; meaningless assembly of words. According to Wittgenstein, “all religious terms seem to be used as similes or allegorically. For when we speak of God and the he sees everything and when we kneel and pray to him, all our terms and actions seem to be parts of a great power whose grace we try to win. And as soon as we try to drop the similes and simply to state the facts which stand behind it, we find that there are no such facts. And so, what at first appeared to be similes now seem to be mere nonsense.”<sup>47</sup> In a similar vein, Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus* argues that religious propositions such as *God loves us* have a peculiar logical role in the religious form of life. This is not a matter of proofs as in the case of some empirical propositions. Therefore, any religious claims should be understood within the characterization of the epistemological framework of such assertions. This position was corroborated by Disu when he asserts “every system should operate within its own epistemological structure”<sup>48</sup>

For Wittgenstein, it is an error to use scientific evidence to establish the validity of religious belief. His contention is that scientific evidence is not a basis for reaching out to our understanding religious belief. Such an attempt would even destroy the very fabric and nature of religious belief. Scientific or historical evidences are not sufficient to make religious belief indubitable. In his words “the indubitability would not be enough to make me change my whole life”<sup>49</sup>

The religious believer, therefore, does not use reason in the same manner as a scientist or historian does. Can we now say that the believers are unreasonable when it comes to matter of religious belief? Wittgenstein answers in the affirmative thus:

I would say, they are certainly not reasonable, that is obvious...Anyone who reads the Epistle will find it said: not only that it is not reasonable, but it is folly”<sup>50</sup>

Wittgenstein position might be read to be somewhat harsh or extreme to religion. Perhaps his position is informed by his being outside of religious faiths. In this sense, one may not be able to effectively deny religion to be absolutely lacking in reason especially one that sustain such religious narratives.

Similarly, Ross posits that religious discourse is like craft bound discourse. He opines that the language of religious belief is a kind of craft bound which “cannot be learnt without participatory experience in the craft”<sup>51</sup> A similar argument for the incoherence of non-confessional religious education is presented by Roger Marples in his paper 'Is religious education possible?' Marples sets out to show that 'religious understanding presupposes religious belief and hence that 'those of us who admit to no religious beliefs cannot be said to possess such understanding'<sup>52</sup> His argument rests on the same two premises as Hirst's argument in 'The forms of knowledge revisited'. Hirst's first premise, that religion is 'a logically unique form of knowledge', is endorsed by Marples in the following passage:

My concern is with people who do not share a religious form of life. They have not been initiated into its language and associated conception of reality . . . They confess to not knowing what is being said when they hear statements such as 'God is omnipotent', 'When we die we shall go to heaven'. In addition to everyday language it appears that there are subsections of society speaking a 'language' of their own. Try as they may to understand they remain simply baffled.<sup>53</sup>

Religion, according to Marples, is a 'form of life' with its own 'language and associated conception of reality'. Religious propositions are formulated not in the



'language of everyday'<sup>54</sup> but in a distinctive religious language, a language which the uninitiated simply do not understand. Whether or not Marples would want to use the phrase 'form of knowledge' to describe religion, he would certainly agree that religious propositions have 'unique truth criteria' and are not reducible to propositions of other logical types. As with Hirst's presentation of this premise, it might be thought that Marples' argument is less than persuasive here. Is it true that non-believers are 'baffled' by religious language? Do they in fact profess not to understand what is meant by such propositions as 'God is omnipotent' and 'When we die we shall go to heaven'? If we were to conduct a survey, is it not more likely that we should find non-believers professing to understand but disagree with religious truth claims? The non-believer's claim is not only that she is unable to understand the proposition 'God exists' as a result of inadequate evidence but that such understanding can only occur when she has commensurate spiritual experience of such claim. As such, Marples claim is in order.

Hirst's second premise, that understanding a logically unique form of knowledge involves holding certain propositions of that form to be true or false, is presented by Marples as follows:

The fact that we do share forms of life with a particular conceptual structure - that is, there is intersubjective agreement as to the truth conditions for the application of concepts - together with the fact that we normally agree on what is to count as fact and fiction, makes possible human communication about the world. So it is that Hamlyn says: 'That there must be facts . . . that make certain statements true is a precondition of any view about the world. What these facts are is something that we can raise questions about only from a point of view within what is agreed, and which provides the framework for intelligible discussions about what is fact and what is no.'<sup>55</sup>

This is the second, Wittgensteinian interpretation of Hirst's second premise, according to which understanding propositions of a particular logical type involves *agreeing* or *accepting* that certain propositions of that type are true or false. The reason for this is that words are connected not only to each other (logical criteria) but also to experiences (experiential criteria), and establishing connections of the latter kind involves accepting the truth of certain contingent propositions. The distinction between logical and experiential criteria finds expression in Marples' paper as a distinction between exercising and applying concepts:

Let us imagine a child who has no religious concepts in his vocabulary. Now it is quite easy to imagine someone teaching

him the language game of religion, enabling him to become quite competent in speaking the language in accordance with its grammar such that to all intents and purposes he would appear to understand. But why should we assume that he understands simply because he can speak the language? There is more to understanding than verbal skill. There has to be a minimal grasp of the relevant concepts; and there is more to this than simply being able to exercise the concept. Unless one can apply the concept to particular cases one's so called understanding is little more than an ability to parrot<sup>56</sup>

To understand the 'language game of religion' it is not enough to be able to *exercise* religious concepts, to have the 'verbal skill' which consists in knowing the logical connections

between religious words; one must also be able to *apply* religious concepts, which is to say that one must know the connections between religious words and experiences. Since learning to apply religious concepts requires agreement 'on what is to count as fact and fiction', one cannot come to understand religion without adopting some religious beliefs. Marples' argument, then, though cast in a different idiom, is substantially the same as Hirst's. If religion is a form of life with its own conceptual scheme, and understanding a conceptual scheme involves the ability to apply concepts as well as the ability to exercise them, it follows that religious understanding necessarily involves religious belief.

Following from above, we shall begin to reject the proposition that religion is foundational to moral education. First, is the position that man's moral understanding necessarily dependent on his religious knowledge or beliefs? If the answer to that is yes, then any serious moral education must ultimately be religiously based. If the answer is no and moral knowledge is autonomous, then there is a prima facie case for direct specific moral education. Secondly, what is the status of religious propositions? Is there here a domain of knowledge or simply one of beliefs? And if the latter is the case, is it justifiable for our schools to instruct pupils in one particular faith and to conduct worship in accordance with it? In arguing first for the autonomy of morality and moral education, I shall not be denying that moral principles and religious beliefs may have a thin line of connection yet reasons ranging from the essence of religious faith to multiplicity and divergent faiths which are largely irreconcilable will make it difficult to allow religion to be the bedrock of moral education in our schools. My take is in the light of the philosophical character of moral judgements. Also, our experiential circumstance of religion will provide significant practical instances. Throughout I shall directly reference

Christian faith rather than any other religion but much of what I say is believed to be applicable more widely. It is our hope that we will be able to provide substantial educational conclusions that can provide direction for embarking on moral education programme.

To begin, let us consider the thesis that states that moral questions are in fact inseparable from religious questions, that in the last analysis-if you really get down to the business-moral values rest on religious beliefs for without this foundation there really are no reasons why one should be just, tell the truth, respect other people's property, and so on ? In its strongest form this view maintains that for something to be right, it has to be the command or will of God. 'Right' is taken to mean 'doing the will or command of God' and thus our knowledge of what is right comes from our knowing what God wills or commands. Without our knowledge of God's will, we can only live according to our personal likes or dislikes for without this foundation, moral principles amount to nothing. But it is important to remark that it is one thing to maintain that whatever is right is also the will of God, it is quite another to maintain, as this thesis does, that for something to be right is just for it to be the will or command of God. On the first view man may have knowledge of right of a purely natural kind and in addition believe that what he thus knows to be right is also according to God's will. On the other view being right and being the will of God are equated in meaning so that it can be consistently maintained that man only knows what is right because he can know what God wills. Moral terms like good, right and ought are here being so logically tied to religious terms that moral judgements have become essentially judgements of a religious kind, judgements as to the will of God. Because of the equation of meaning, it is argued that man's moral knowledge rests entirely on what God reveals as His will in Scripture, the church or by His indwelling Spirit.

This thesis really consists of two related claims. First, to say something is right, good and ought to be done, means that it is willed by God. Secondly that we only know what is right or good by coming to know what God's wills. It may, however, be said that few Christians go as far as to make the first claim on the equation of meaning though more people are prepared to accept the second claim as to the source and basis of moral knowledge. To hold simply to the second claim only and not to both is to subscribe to a somewhat weaker thesis. Nevertheless both positions firmly root moral knowledge in religious knowledge. The strong one ties a logical knot making moral knowledge

necessarily dependent on religious knowledge. The weaker one while allowing that other bases for moral knowledge are conceivable and possible denies that as a matter of fact we have any other. Both theses seem to have an appeal for religious believers but there are, at least three different forms of argument why they must both be rejected by Christians and educators.

First, the second claim which is common to both strong and weak theses, that man only knows right from wrong by discovering God's will, is surely quite contrary to the empirical facts. Surely it is plain, unless one is so totally bewildered by certain extreme forms of Biblical interpretation that one cannot see the evidence before one's very eyes that men do know that lying, promiscuous sex-relations, colour bar and war are wrong quite independently of Christian revelation. The terms right and wrong, good and bad have meaning as ordinary everyday terms in human discourse. They are terms used for judgements for which men have perfectly good reasons which have nothing to do with religious beliefs. It is just false to say that there are no reasons for something being good or for my being good, other than that God has willed or revealed this. Certainly it is false to suggest, as some Christians have claimed that outside the Judaeo- Christian tradition men have no genuine moral knowledge because they lack the revelation of God's will. How is it then that one can find the highest moral understanding in other traditions? Perhaps not in all, but then all forms of knowledge are known in varying degrees within different traditions. We can for example ask, what of the moral understanding of Socrates and Aristotle based on the straight use of reason and observation? Can we frankly maintain that these philosophers had no justifiable moral knowledge? Without doubt, it is pretty indisputable that this people had a very great deal of it and that they did not derive it from Judaeo- Christian beliefs. Similar position was advanced by Oladipo and some other African philosophers. They claim that Africans morality was social rather than religious in origin. We will return to this later. In the meantime, what we are interested in is that people of varied traditions had moral knowledge and that it rested in fact not on religious revelation but on rational judgement. Secondly, it seems to me that the second claim is clearly inconsistent with Biblical teaching on the basis of morals. Far from it being the case that the New Testament teaches that man's knowledge of right and wrong comes from revelation; the reverse is clearly asserted. While Biblical doctrine is not directly our concern here, it will not be out of place to briefly make reference to one or two clear passages. In Romans 2 .14 & 15 the Gentiles are categorically acknowledged to have a knowledge of the moral law quite independently of the law of Moses.<sup>57</sup> They have

it by nature we are told. Indeed the essence of the debate in this passage is that all men stand condemned before God because they know or can know the moral law and do not in fact live up to it.

Thirdly, both strong and weak theses are I think philosophically unsound. The strong thesis rests on the claim that what is meant by 'right' and 'good' is simply 'willed or commanded by God'. To say something is right or ought to be done is just to say that God wills it. Now this can be, of course, a way of winning one's case by definition—a prescriptive definition that legislates that we are only going to count as good or right whatever we assert as being willed by God. But this surely is to be rejected as an attempt to make language do just what one wants when our ordinary understanding of the term will not allow this. For if we inspect the meaning of right, ought, good, we do not at all find that their meaning is that willed or commanded by God. There is, in fact, no necessary connection between the meanings of these two groups of concepts at all. If I say something is right I am voicing a judgement on some action. If I say God wills this, then I am saying something quite different. I am describing a state of affairs. The terms have quite distinct uses in our discourse and do not at all mean the same. To draw a parallel I might just as well say that the term 'object' means 'what is created by God'. Of course objects may be created by God, but the meaning of the term 'object' is not at all the meaning of the phrase 'what is created by God'. Similarly what is good and right might, in fact, be willed or commanded by God—but to say that right means willed by God is just simply false.

From this emerges another point that a term like 'right', 'ought', or 'good' has a function which is logically quite different in kind from a phrase like 'what is commanded by God'. The first expresses the moral value of an action, expresses a decision, choice, judgement of value; the second states what the case is. There is a great gulf fixed between knowing any form of facts, knowing what is the case, and knowing what is right or good or what ought to be the case. To confuse the two is just to be guilty of a logical blunder. It is to be guilty of one form of what is known as the naturalistic fallacy, in which two expressions with fundamentally different uses are made to do the same kind of job. It confuses statements or judgements of fact with statements or judgements of value. But further, to equate good and right with what is commanded by God has disastrous results for Christian doctrine. For if what is good is by definition whatever God wills then affirmations of the goodness of God, of His moral excellence, become trivial truisms,

they are necessarily true by definition. In this way there is no significant content to saying that God's will is good, or even that He is righteous, for by definition things could, not be otherwise. This is to make empty, truths that Christians hold to be part of a supreme and momentous revelation: that God is righteous, good and loving rather than a morally indifferent or viciously evil creator. But if God is by definition these things, for Him to be otherwise is made just a formal contradiction in the meaning of terms. Again this equation destroys the Christian's moral life, for that becomes simply the obedience of will or command, no questions being asked about its moral nature.

For to say that certain actions are commanded by God is by definition to say that they are good. The place of moral judgement in life is removed entirely; what remains is simply obedience, indeed supreme might becomes right. But neither of these consequences is tolerable in Christian doctrine. That God is a supremely excellent being is not a definitional truism. Whether the creator is morally excellent or morally evil is a logically open question that must turn on evidence. Good is not just a label for the character of God's will or commands no matter what their character may be. Nor is the Christian obeying principles that he does not know to be good. In that case good cannot be simply what God wills or commands. Man must have moral knowledge of good and bad, right and wrong independently of any knowledge he has of God's will or of His Nature. It is in fact only if man has such independent moral knowledge that it is logically possible for him to grasp the significant truth that God is good and that His will and commands are righteous. All the criticisms just made of the strong thesis are in fact also applicable, with only the slightest modification to the weak thesis as well. To say that we will only count as genuine the moral knowledge we can acquire from knowing the will of God, is to win the argument prescriptively once more. To jump straight from what God commands to what is good or right to do, is to commit the naturalistic fallacy all over again, even when there is no equation of meaning. Though not now true by definition the doctrine of the goodness of God remains empty if the only basis of our knowledge of goodness is our knowledge of His will and the moral life is still reduced to mere obedience.

From these criticisms it is surely clear that if Christian doctrine is not to run into serious logical difficulties it must be maintained that man does have moral knowledge which he acquires by some means other than by divine revelation. Why it has ever seemed important to Christians to think of morals and religion as tied together in these

ways is not easy to understand. For as was said earlier, to hold simply that what is right is indeed willed or commanded by God in no way commits us to saying that we can only learn what is right by knowing the expressed will of God. An autonomous knowledge of morals is quite compatible with moral principles being also the will or commands of God. Take the parallel of scientific knowledge. A Christian might argue that the laws of the physical world are the laws commanded or willed for it by God. He might then unthinkingly subscribe to the thesis that because the laws are God's commands, the only way to know them is to be told them by God. Indeed he might hold the stronger thesis that for a scientific statement to be true is for it to be what God has commanded. As then 'true' means 'commanded by God' the only way to know the laws is to get at the very commands of God themselves. But not even the most fundamental fundamentalist holds that one knows the laws of the physical world by revelation. We know them by scientific investigation. The laws of the physical world may or may not be commanded by God, whether or not they are is quite independent of the fact that the way we know the laws is by scientific experiment and observation.

The theses I have criticized maintain that because what is right is willed by God we must come to know what is right by revelation from God. But that moral principles are willed by God in fact tells us nothing about how man gets to know what is right or wrong. Just as man knows the laws of the physical world so man can also know what is right and wrong, by the exercise of reason. Whether or not moral or physical laws are God's commands is another question. There is therefore, moral knowledge which is fully being attained independently of specifically religious revelation in any form.

### **2.3 Religion, Morality and Philosophy**

Hannay in exploring the relationship that exist between religion and morality anthropologically argued that morality has no essential connection with religion, although at a certain stage in human development the two may have been linked together but such linkage was not objective and as such not necessary.<sup>58</sup> Hannay illustrated how atheists and freethinkers have led blameless lives and that it will be false to think that those people who have been brought up to associate a certain code of moral action with a religious doctrine will in the event of losing their religious faith, make their foundations of morality come to ruins; this he argued is a psychological association and not an objective and necessary connection. If the only reason known to us for leading an honest life is that it is the command of God, who will punish you in after life if you disobey it,

and then you suddenly cease to believe in God, there will seem to be no reason for continuing to be honest. But if you have always felt that quite apart from the command of God there may be utilitarian or other reasons for honesty, then a loss of faith will not upset your established mode of life. And just as it is wrong to argue from the psychological results of a loss of faith in individual cases, so it is dangerous to draw general conclusions from the fact that morality has developed in association with religion.

In the same vein. Kai Nielsen rebuts the notion of associating religion to morality. Relying on the traditional argument which proposes that no information about the nature of reality, or knowledge that there is a God and that He issues commands, will by itself tell us what is good or what we ought to do. The statement, 'God wills x', is not a moral pronouncement. Before we know whether we ought to do x, we must know that what God wills is good. And in order to know that what God wills is good, we should have to judge independently that it is good. That something is good is not entailed by God's willing it, for otherwise it would be redundant to ask, 'Is what God wills good? But this question is not redundant. ' God wills x' or ' God commands x ' is not equivalent to ' x is good ', as ' x is a male parent ' is equivalent to ' x is a father'. ' God wills it but is it good?' is not a senseless self-answering question like ' Fred is a male parent, but is he a father?'. The moral agent must independently decide that whatever God wills or commands is good.

Nielsen argues that it is natural for the believer to say: 'Well it isn't just God's saying so or ordering it that makes an action obligatory or good. Moral agent must freely choose or decide what to do. God in His wisdom gives us this choice. Otherwise we would be automata, doing what we do simply on authority. Also, the believer may assert like Barth and Brunner in saying that we owe God unconditional obedience, but we owe this to God because He is supremely good and supremely loving. When we reflect on what He must be like, as a Being worthy of worship, we realize He ought unconditionally to be obeyed.'

But to say this according to Nielsen is really to give Plato and Russell their point. We, as moral agents, form moral convictions and decide that such a Being must be good and His commandments must be followed. But this is so not because He utters them but because God, being God, is good. But we have here used our own moral awareness and sensitivity to decide that God is good and that God ought to be obeyed. We have not derived our moral convictions just from discovering what are the commands of God. No



command, God's or anyone else's, can simply, as a command, serve as our ultimate moral standard; and that this is the case purely as a matter of logic and not just a result of "sinful, prideful rebellion"<sup>59</sup> against God's law.

It is again possible for the believer to attempt to show that religion and morality are dependent by arguing in the following way: "the Good consists in always doing what God wills at any particular moment" One does not mean to be giving an analysis of the ordinary uses of "good" at all.' The plain man is too caught up in sin, too confused and prideful to know his true condition. Only the man who has known sickness unto death, who has despaired of the world, who has been willing to die to the world uses 'good' in its deepest, fullest, most correct sense. It is to him I will turn when I wish to come to define 'good' in any adequate way. He, as a man of faith, knows God; through his despair and then faith he has finally come to hear God and thus to perceive the good. Brunner's definition does not aim to report, and enshrine, the inevitable selfishness and aggression of the plain man embodied in the plain man's use of 'good'; rather it reports the use of the word by the man of faith and stipulates a new use for the man who would really know the good. Like a really consistent hedonist who would argue that 'Pleasure is good' really means just 'Pleasure is pleasure' or 'Pleasure is pleasant,' I shall say that I will take 'good' when used in a fundamental moral sense, to mean just what God wills. 'X is good' is stipulated to be equivalent to 'X is willed by God' or 'X is a command of God'. On this stipulated use 'X is commanded by God but is X good?' becomes a self-answering question in the same way 'X is a rectangle but does X really have four sides?' is a self-answering question. I admit that in ordinary language my question is not self-answering but I am not talking about confused ordinary language but about the more adequate language of the man who really knows the good.

It is to be noted that neither the consistent hedonist nor the Christian moralist can be shown to have committed a fallacy if he takes this approach. However, it can be shown that both have begged the issue in a complicated way and trivialized their own position in a way in which it is doubtful that any hedonist or Christian moralist would wish to do. And, more importantly, it has not been shown by such a move how, in any ordinary senses of the words 'good', 'right', 'obligatory', etc., moral judgments can be derived from nonmoral religious claims. If we continue to use moral language, as in fact we-Christians and non-Christians-do, such a derivation has not been made. The subject has only been changed. The man in moral perplexity wants to know whether in the sense in which the terms are generally used, he can discover what is good by discovering what

God wishes him to do. To do this he must be able literally to derive moral judgements from non-moral religious assertions. To be told that in some specially stipulated sense of 'good' he can do so will not relieve his perplexity, and to be told that this stipulated definition is justified because the man of faith knows, as much as any man can know, what is really good begs just the question that is at issue. That we know what we ought to do when we have found out (assuming that in some sense we can 'find out') what God really wishes us to do, is just the point in question. Thus, when God says "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire" it is, on the Christian's more adequate use, really senseless to ask if this command of God's is good. We are told we ought to accept this stipulated definition because it really enshrines a more adequate conception of good. But does it really? In ordinary language it is not senseless to ask if this command of God's is really good. A believer cannot answer this question in the negative and remain a believer; but people like Mill, McTaggart and Russell have rejected a belief in Christianity on issues like this. And it has provided torment for many of the great believers. Is it really possible to show Mill, McTaggart and Russell to be wrong by definitional fiat? We can stipulate a new use for the mark (token, sign-vehicle) 'good'. But what do we prove by this move? Isn't the old question back again in only a thinly veiled linguistic disguise? Would we not ask: 'Is this really a better-a morally more adequate-use of "good"?' How else could we answer this but by an appeal to our own admittedly fallible moral understanding? We cannot stipulate our way out of this question, for when we say our stipulative definition is more adequate or better or reflects a more heightened moral awareness than the ordinary uses of 'good', we still have appealed to 'more adequate', 'better' or 'a more heightened moral awareness' in the ordinary non-stipulated senses of these terms.

Following from above, religion requires that learners are initiated into some beliefs. And these beliefs remain central and sacrosanct to religion. And more importantly, learners or newly initiated are forbidden from doubting or question the veracity of such religious claims. More importantly, one religion hardly accommodates the beliefs of other religion. Infact, this irreconcilable foundational differences among religions shot it off as platform for raising learners consciousness in moral matters.

In the face of such sweeping indictments above, what have the defenders of religion as an indispensable basis of morality had to say? Rather strangely, it is not easy to find among recent writers on ethics uncompromising and powerful exponents of this traditional view. If we turn, for example, to the Reverend Hastings Rashdall, where we

might expect to find such a view, we are surprised at the modesty of his claims. His ideas are presented at length in his well-known two-volume work, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, in the two chapters on "Metaphysics and Morality" and "Religion and Morality." But in a little volume of less than a hundred pages, written a few years later, which he describes in a preface as "necessarily little more than a condensation of my Theory of Good and Evil," he has himself formally summarized his views on the subject. It seems to me best to quote his summary almost in full:

1. Morality cannot be based upon or deduced from any metaphysical or theological proposition whatever. The moral judgment is ultimate and immediate. Putting this into more popular language, the immediate recognition that I ought to act in a certain way supplies a sufficient reason for so acting entirely apart from anything else that I may believe about the ultimate nature of things.
2. But the recognition of the validity of moral obligation in general or of any particular moral judgment logically implies the belief in a permanent spiritual self which is really the cause of its own actions. Such a belief is in the strictest sense a postulate of morality.
3. The belief in God is not a postulate of morality in such a sense that the rejection of it involves a denial of all meaning or validity to our moral judgments, but the acceptance or rejection of this belief does materially affect the sense which we give to the idea of obligation. The belief in the objectivity of moral judgments implies that the moral law is recognized as no merely accidental element in the construction of the human mind, but as an ultimate fact about the universe. This rational demand cannot be met by any merely materialistic or naturalistic metaphysics and is best satisfied by a theory which explains the world as an expression of an intrinsically righteous rational will, and the moral consciousness as an imperfect revelation of the ideal towards which that will is directed. The belief in God may be described as a postulate of morality in a less strict or secondary sense.
4. So far from ethics being based upon or deduced from theology, a rational theology is largely based upon Ethics: since the moral Consciousness supplies us with all the knowledge we possess as to the action, character, and direction of the

supreme Will, and forms an important element in the argument for the existence of such a Will.

5. We must peremptorily reject the view that the obligation of morality depends upon sanctions, i.e. reward and punishment, in this life or any other. But, as the belief in an objective moral law naturally leads up to and requires for its full justification the idea of God, so the idea of God involves the belief in immortality if the present life seems an inadequate fulfillment of the moral ideal. In ways which need not be recapitulated, we have seen that it is practically a belief eminently favorable to the maximum influence of the moral ideal on life.<sup>60</sup>

The whole position may perhaps be still more simply summed up. It is possible for a man to know his duty, and to achieve considerable success in doing it, without any belief in God or immortality or any of the other beliefs commonly spoken of as religious; but he is likely to know and do it better if he accepts a view of the Universe which includes as its most fundamental articles these two beliefs.<sup>61</sup>

## **2.4 The Nature of Morality and Moral Education**

We begin this section by first stating what morality is not as erroneously thought by some scholars. First, morality is not merely a description of the behavioural patterns and practices of a group, such as a sociologist might discover in studying the mores of a particular society. Of any such practices or mores it is possible to ask, and people do ask, 'But ought such practices to exist? Are they right and good?' In other words, the moral judgment comes in after the description of the practices is made; and to observe this is to observe an important feature of morality, namely, that moral judgments, at least some of them and the most important of them, are cross-cultural and universal, appealing as they do to standards outside any particular culture. It follows from this observation also that some researchers who study the processes of socialization of children or those who study causes of anti-social behaviour may not in fact be studying processes of moral education at all, even if it is alleged that they are. It depends on whether the practices into which people are socialized are moral or not. It is possible for socialized behaviour to be immoral and for moral behaviour to be anti-social.

Secondly, morality is not necessarily conformity to religious, political, or legal prescriptions. Moral education models that attempt to substitute religious education or

political education or legal education for moral education may be missing the mark in the same way that mere socialization may miss the mark. That is not to say that the institutions of religion, politics, and the law are necessarily and exclusively anti moral; fortunately they often underline and encourage moral behaviour and enhance moral understanding in their teachings. But it is to say that they are not necessarily moral; and from the moral standpoint they must conform to the demands of moral reason when they conflict with its requirement. These observations highlight two further features of morality. One is that morality, as a form of human discourse and thought, is autonomous; its demands are not dependent on, or reducible to, any other form of thought or discourse. The other feature is that the demands of morality are overriding; no prescription from any other form of discourse can for a rational person in normal circumstances take precedence.

Thirdly, morality is not a form of rational prudence. It is sometimes thought that because an individual wisely arranges his life in such a way as to fulfil his personal ideals for the good life, he has achieved morality. Such a person will likely to have worked hard to get a good job, have sufficient income and a sizeable pension, not waste or gamble, will obey the law and conform to social practices to avoid social friction, set great store in pursuing literature and the arts, treasure excellence in sports and other leisure-time activities, perfect his talents, fulfil his potential, and so on. Such a person is said to have his values in order. Though, there is a sense in which the pursuit of personal values has a moral dimension but does not amount to morality. There is a language of worth expressing judgements about how one ought to live one's life quite apart from how it affects others. But this form of personal morality, or morality of the good life, must be sharply distinguished or contrasted from social morality, where rules governing behaviour are entirely of the inter-personal regulatory kind. It needs to be noted that we are here concerned exclusively with the latter. The model of moral education is a model of social or inter-personal moral education, as has already been mentioned.

So far we have remarked only on what morality is not; it is time now to try to give an account of what it is. To begin with, it will be asserted, though leaving it until later to explain the reasonableness of the assertion, that morality is doing the right thing for the right reason and moral education is getting others to do the right thing for the right reason. Now an astute reader will immediately question this assertion by pointing out that sometimes we can do the right thing (place a crosscourt smash) for the right reason (frustrate the opponent and win the game) and not be within the moral domain at all. The

objection is a good one; but the reply to that is that what is really meant is that we should do the morally right thing for the morally right reason. My interlocutor may press on with his objection by noting that the claim now is circular. Again he is right; but the circularity is not of a vicious kind, as philosophers would say, because it highlights the point already made, that morality is autonomous. No reason of a non-moral kind will satisfy the demands of morality. A little later we will explain what makes a reason a moral one. For now it will simply be noted that doing the right thing for the right reason is a necessary condition, though not a sufficient one, for morality; and as such it points to two further features of morality.

One is that morality is centrally concerned with the giving of reasons. The terms ‘should’, ‘ought’, and their cognates are the standard terms used to make moral injunctions. The almost automatic and correct response to, ‘You ought to do so and so’, is ‘Why?’, suggesting that moral judgments are not merely expressing feelings but are based on supporting reasons. And it is because there are available publicly acceptable, objective reasons for moral judgments, based, as we shall see, on universal principles, that it is appropriate to speak of moral education proper, as distinct from training, where ‘education’ implies knowledge and understanding and getting ‘on the inside of a form of thought’<sup>62</sup>. The other point to note is that morality requires not only good judgment but also corresponding action; to be fully moral one must do the right thing as well as have the right reason. Both are required. It takes into account two prominent themes in moral theory —the emphasis on motive and reason as advanced by philosophers such as Aristotle and Kant. The reason or motive one has for doing a particular act changes the character of the act. To drive a car slowly and cautiously amidst a crowd or past a playground because one has noticed a policeman in the rear-vision mirror does not count as a moral act; whereas if one does so to prevent possible harm to people, irrespective of the presence of a patrol or a law requiring it, then it does count as a moral act. In one sense, of course, the act was the same; the car was driven slowly. But that is merely to say that one can do the right thing for the wrong reason or for no reason; just as one can also do the wrong thing for the wrong reason or fail to do the right thing despite having the right reasons.

In his article, Barrow argues that the focus of the study of morality and moral education is to assist learners to understand moral issues and not to instil conviction in particular values. And that individual should be led to assess or consider societal values

and that they should be allowed to form whatever values they want just as critical teaching of science or history implies that one should create one's own idiosyncratic scientific or historical claims. In each case it means rather that the individual should be encouraged to understand and see for himself whatever may be the case. In some instances the case may be uncertain, or simply a matter of opinion. Thus the good history teacher enables his students to appreciate or see that the holocaust took place (while the incompetent one mysteriously denies the evidence). But the good teacher encourages his students to study the evidence and form their own opinion. Similarly, the good teacher does not lay down the law on a complex question such as abortion, but he does show that it is complex, and he tries to develop understanding of the point that that is why any dogmatic attempt to impose a particular view on others is not acceptable.<sup>63</sup>

Another important dimension to morality is that the degree of responsibility for actions is needed. Aristotle proposed that the six kinds of knowledge requisite for being responsible are to know: what you are doing, who you are, what or whom you are acting on, and to what end and to what degree you are doing it. Fischer and Ravizza extend this argument by saying:

A person can be morally responsible for his behaviour. Moral responsibility, however it is understood, appears to require some sort of control. If individuals had no control over their actions, they would not be responsible for them...An individual with the capacity to be responsible must have some ability to think and hence to behave in a rational way<sup>64</sup>

Equally, Kant argued that rationality is a foundation for morality and Kant's own work is largely motivated by a desire to show that morality has a central place in rational discourse. Bentham also drew parallels between discussions about morality and rational investigation. For example, Donald Broom citing Gert states that Morality is a public system applying to all rational persons governing behaviour which affects others and which has the minimization of evil as its end, and which includes what are commonly known as the moral rules at its core.<sup>65</sup>

Hence, morality consists of certain elements that determine the essence of morality. The elements include beliefs about the nature of man, beliefs about ideals of what is good or desirable, rules specifying what ought to be done and of course motives that incline us to choose the right course of action.

## 2.5 Morality and Value Education

Moral questions are about behaviour, but not simply about behaviour as such, for the question of morality does not arise except in a social and institutional setting. Morality is not concerned with the description or analysis of the way in which people in social and interpersonal settings, relationships and transactions do in fact behave. Morality concerns the conduct of ourselves in relation to other people, and theirs in regard to us, and the way in which we agree between us to regulate ourselves in our interpersonal transactions by adherence to a set of principles. Our agreement to do so rests on our recognition that our interests are preserved and promoted within the nexus of relations and obligations that constitute our lives as human beings. The commitment of human beings to such obligations is exemplified in our use of language and our development of individual and community relations in the institutional forms of various kinds in which our values and systems of value are embodied. This commitment starts with our birth and increases as we come to maturity. Being the creatures we are, and living as we have to under the constraints of the natural and social conditions surrounding us, we could not possibly survive, much less flourish, without being enmeshed in and having to conform to the customs, conventions and norms of all the various institutions that human beings have established and developed in order to stabilise their identity, understand and control their environment, and endeavour to give some point and purpose to their lives.

The chief of these institutions is language and interpersonal communication. It is in and through these that human beings have found it possible to form and give expression to our sophisticated conceptions of the world and all our main concerns in it, in which the various elements of meaning, truth and value are enmeshed. Our judgements on matters of significance and value are negotiated and settled at the level of the community and in the various forms of relationship, institutions and agencies in and by means of which the life of each community is carried on. It is not the case that we can simply choose (or not) to 'accept' or to 'play the game' of morality and that this 'choosing' depends in turn upon our 'acceptance' of the institutions in which morality is characteristically exercised. In virtue of the kind of creatures we are and the characteristic form of life we share, and given the ways in which, as fellow constituents in it, we articulate it and elaborate upon it between ourselves, the presence, function and direction of values and regulative principles lie at the heart of the norms and conventions of the



various institutions into which human beings, in all our various communities and cultures, are progressively initiated and of which we become bearers and beneficiaries. That initiation into values and morality, therefore, is concerned with helping us to understand that human life is beset with obligations.

One of the aims of this form of life, and of the values education that gives young people an initiation into it, will be to give us a knowledge of the rules which function in this mode of relating to other people and to seek to develop in us a grasp of its underlying principles, together with the ability to apply these rules intelligently, and to have the settled disposition to do so. For without such an education in values and morality we should be significantly impoverished in our attempt to come to terms with the demands we face in our lives and to exercise our informed choice in order to make that process manageable, tolerable and possibly even enjoyable. In a plural society, where the range of choices is increasingly wide, such an education in the values and morality of pluralism and choice becomes even more important. Such an education will help to make us see that our life in the different cultures and communities in which we have our being, gain our identity and begin to exercise our choice, is capable of being improved upon, and that just possibly the exercise of our intellectual resources, imagination and creativity can help to add quality to it and make it excellent. An education in values will help us to develop and articulate the reasons which both satisfy us and are open to public evaluation for any particular value judgement or moral decision or for any general moral code that we may make for ourselves or come to adopt, within the institutional framework of our human personhood.

Thus human conduct and action is moral, when it is engaged in consciously and intentionally as part of a whole pattern of behaviour towards other people, in accordance with principles. As such it will be based upon certain beliefs about the rights and duties people have, to do, in some way, with the furtherance of the interests of people in general, the promotion of their welfare and the inhibition or prevention of harm to them. These beliefs will rest upon certain core notions about what constitutes right and wrong—our most basic beliefs concerning the meaning and value of human life and the importance of social and community cultures in sustaining and enriching it—and what one ought to do, as well as an awareness of what ‘ought’ language, in the realm of interpersonal conduct and social relations, commits one to. Our judgements and actions in moral matters will spring from a free choice on our part, as mature moral agents, and will

be based upon our ability to give reasons for those choices that are relevant and appropriate, capable (in principle, at least) of being judged such by people generally.

This means that the moral actions we undertake will be such as can be judged to be generalizable: impartial and equally binding on all those who regard such an act as intending to promote human welfare. The latter consideration will mean that the grounds for the action will not be trivial but will really count for something—will have ‘a certain magnitude’. They will be held sincerely and applied and exercised with consistency. Morality is about adopting, justifying, analysing, or applying principles in interpersonal affairs in the world, that are universalizable, over-riding, other regarding, action-guiding or prescribing, and significantly related to the promotion of human welfare and the avoidance or inhibition of harm to human beings. Our attending to these requirements in moral matters is nowhere more called for than in our observance of the various rules and conventions governing all the occasions of interpersonal communication and relations in which we are called upon, as *actors*, to participate. The point of this argument is that individuals can develop as morally mature and autonomous agents capable of fully participating in society only if they are sufficiently informed, prepared and predisposed. This means that they have some kind of minimum right to health and sustenance; that they have the minimal domestic conditions for perpetuating existence; and that they can engage in communication with others they recognise as equals in having the same rights to autonomy and individual choice as they are aware of developing in themselves, and with whom they can join in discussion, consideration and planning of mutually beneficial modes of action.

On this account, the whole of society and all its constituent groups and communities have a direct interest in securing, providing and safeguarding those conditions and services presupposed by and required for our participation in community life and a society opening up one’s freedom to choose and one’s equal right to access the goods it offers. This in turn entails the establishment, provision and work of educating institutions, in which people growing towards maturity and autonomy will be helped to acquire knowledge of such goods and services as are offered in and by society, and the ability to make informed choices to avail oneself of them, in ways that will confirm and enhance one’s own quality of life and not threaten that of others. These moral values seem to point to one particular form of social and political arrangement in which such a range of choices and options can be realised and made available to all: that most preferred form of government—the modern plural democracy.

Those who conceive of values education in connection with the maintenance of the rights of all individuals, groups and cultures to a socially inclusive and democratic society are making a point about the nature of the world as they perceive it—as a complex conjunction of aggregations of individual human beings. As Aristotle maintained, ‘Man is by nature an animal that lives in groups’; if we do not live, indeed we could not start our existence or survive, if we lived alone on desert islands. Personal freedom and individual choice is only possible as an outgrowth of the knowledge and values that other members and groups in society have opened up to us, in all the many and varied modes, styles and settings of culture and value. In this way we can be given some intimation of what choices are available to us in modern plural societies, and we can begin to understand what making choices and calculating the consequences of our choices and actions might mean. For most of us this intimation is first made through our educational experiences, both formal and informal, compulsorily prescribed by others or voluntarily chosen by us, as being in our own interests and those of our community.

Ratz emphasises the importance of offering such educational experiences to others in a discussion of what he calls the duties of autonomy. According to Ratz, there is more one can do to help another person have an autonomous life than to stand off and refrain from coercing and manipulating him. There are two further categories of autonomy-based duties towards another person. One is to help in creating the inner capacities required for the conduct of an autonomous life. Some of these concern cognitive capacities, such as the power to absorb, remember and use information, reasoning abilities, and the like. Others concern one’s emotional and imaginative make-up. Still others concern health and physical abilities and skills. The third type of autonomy-based duty towards another concern the creation of an adequate range of options for him to choose from. It is a paradox of our existence that our autonomy requires the work of other persons. It is given to us and increased by our education; and that requires the learning of language and the transmission of knowledge. Both of these are on-going social activities and public enterprises in which at least two people must engage in an interaction predicated upon the assumption of the mutual tolerance and regard that is only embodied in the institutions of society. Without the one, there cannot be the other; and without that key institution called education, there can be neither.<sup>66</sup> For autonomy is the flower that grows out of seeds planted and tended by heteronomous hands. For Ratz this point carries a correlative moral implication: on this argument we have a moral obligation, as Bailey puts it, ‘to develop and maintain our own autonomy

and the autonomy of others'<sup>67</sup> And, as is clear from the argument, this obligation is one that we bear throughout the whole of our lives.

It might be retorted from what we have said that morality is concerned with the giving of reasons that why are certain reasons moral ones and others not. What then is the nature of moral reasons? Quite obviously some reasons for action are not moral. Someone who says that one should be kind because it is sunny and it is Thursday is not giving moral reasons, because such reasons are not relevant to morality. A reason such as 'because it relieves suffering' is relevant. For my reasons to be moral, they must be the relevant moral reasons. But what makes reasons relevant? Reasons are relevant if they appeal to certain moral principles, which are referred to as constituent fundamental principles. And what are these? What is their source? How does one justify them? To answer these questions takes us to the heart of moral philosophy, wherein we describe how they are and state what they are.

Their source derives from some observations of the human condition together with considerations about what makes rational behaviour possible. There is near-universal agreement that mankind has in common a set of fears, if realized, and wants, if not realized, that makes the human condition quite intolerable. L.M.Loring says:

We believe, or we take it for granted, that besides immediate pain, such experiences as fear and frustration are universally disagreeable, and that the sense of physical well-being, confidence, and the ability to do what we want to do are universally agreeable. This body of ideas, so much part of our human thinking that it usually passes unnoticed, I call 'the basic values assumption'<sup>68</sup>

This 'basic values assumption' forms one objective basis for moral principles. The occasion for morality is that people live in groups and that conflict of interests is unavoidable. The point and purpose of morality is, in G.J.Warnock's terms, 'to ameliorate the human predicament'<sup>69</sup> through the use of reason (rather than by other measures such as force, or manipulation, or replenishment of resources) when human interests conflict. The use of reason in this predicament requires that certain other principles be posited because they are logically required for reason to operate. Generalizability and the principles of justice and equality, for example, are presupposed in what makes a reason a reason. If one considers the point and purpose of morality, together with the logically necessary conditions presupposed for moral discourse to be

possible, one is able to provide a fairly complete set of constitutive moral principles acceptable to, and widely accepted by any rational person, such principles being both formal enough to catch the essence of the unique character of moral discourse and rich enough in substance to provide guidance in practical inter-personal behaviour and judgment. These principles can briefly be stated as follows:

1. Justice as fairness, often expressed in terms such as impartiality, non-arbitrariness, moral equality, and nondiscrimination.
2. Non-maleficence, enjoining restraint from harming or injuring others.
3. Minimal beneficence, so phrased to indicate our responsibility to assist others in satisfying their basic needs, though not the obligation to satisfy all wants envisaged in conceptions of a good life.
4. Freedom, the injunction that without justification we have no right to interfere with others doing what they want to do.
5. Honesty, expressible also as truthfulness and non-deception. These principles are not only necessary but, arguably, also sufficient for inter-personal morality.<sup>70</sup> They constitute the foundation of morality.

Any reason that derives from these principles is a relevant moral reason. If a reason does not appeal to these principles directly or indirectly, then the reason is irrelevant from a moral standpoint. A number of secondary principles are derivable from each of the fundamental ones, and from each of the secondary principles one can derive a host of moral rules which provide specific guides for action. Examples of derived principles are: do not discriminate on the basis of colour, race, sex, or creed provide equal opportunity; avoid denial of freedom of press, speech, thought, and assembly; consider minority interests; maintain health and life; protect the weak and ill; minimize pain; don't injure or harm others; keep contracts and promises; present evidence; don't indoctrinate. Examples of lower level derivative rules are: take turns; form a queue; don't talk out of turn; don't take what isn't yours; don't bully; don't needlessly interfere; don't manipulate others; respect others' privacy; don't be selfish or greedy; don't insult or degrade others; be kind and thoughtful; be generous; don't fight; don't damage property; don't mess needlessly; don't cheat, lie, or cook the evidence; don't deceive or be a hypocrite; be sincere, among others. We noted above that the principles from which these rules derive stem from 'considerations about what makes rational behaviour possible'.<sup>71</sup> It is these 'rational' conditions for morality that need to be elaborated on briefly here to

provide further insight into the foundations of morality. In this argument, we will closely follow the work of R.S. Peters in his *Ethics and Education*. Peters argues that the justification of moral principles can best proceed by using a 'Kantian type' argument. He then describes this procedure as a 'form of justification of principles consist(ing) of probing behind them in order to make explicit what they implicitly presuppose'.<sup>72</sup> Or again 'If it could be shown that certain principles are necessary for a form of discourse to have meaning, to be applied, or to have point, then this would be a very strong argument for the justification of the principles in question'.<sup>73</sup> To illustrate how this argument works we will examine how he demonstrates that the principle of justice is a criterial attribute of morality, or, what is the same thing, that justice is presupposed in any attempt to justify conduct.

The argument can be stated thus:

- (a) The question 'why ought I to do X?' is a typical request for moral advice or moral justification.
- (b) 'Why ought I to do X?' presupposes choice between alternatives. Otherwise there would be no point in asking the question seriously.
- (c) Considering alternatives (a logical requirement of choice) presupposes discriminable differences between situations constituting grounds or reasons for action. Otherwise there would be no point or meaning in considering alternatives.
- (d) Adducing reasons presupposes impartiality. Reasons, that is to say, are by their very nature such that they create categories stipulating relevant and irrelevant considerations. If this were not so there would be no point in adducing reasons.
- (e) Impartiality presupposes general rules that make reasons relevant. No answer to the question 'Why ought I?' is better or worse than any other unless there are principles for accepting or rejecting reasons on relevant grounds.
- (f) The notion of general rules presupposes the general notion of no distinction without differences. That is, the notion of general rules presupposes 'that what ought to be done in any particular situation or by any particular person ought to be done in any other situation or by another person unless there is some relevant difference in the situation or person in question'. If this were not so, quoting general rules would have no point or meaning,
- (g) The general notion of no distinction without differences is the general principle of rationality exemplified in situations of practical reasoning. This principle is applied in various specific contexts when we judge people, actions, or choices as

impartial, fair, or simply just. Justice, as well as impartiality, fairness, and equality, are thus demonstrated as resting on this fundamental principle of morality. To refuse to accept this general principle is to refuse to engage in any attempt at justifying conduct, which is tantamount to a refusal to engage in moral discourse.

Peters goes on in using a similar type of argument to establish, with greater or lesser effectiveness, four other fundamental principles, viz., worthwhileness of certain activities, consideration of others' interest, freedom, and respect for persons. For our present purposes it is not necessary to examine each of these arguments individually. What has been attempted is just to illustrate the kind of argument usable in different forms to justify positing the principles mentioned which are constitutive of moral thought, and without which rational morality would be impossible. If the above is correct, then, because these rules and principles can be cited as relevant moral reasons, we can satisfy the demand that moral action requires right reasons. If children are to be morally educated they will somehow have to acquire an understanding of these rules and principles and learn to employ them in making moral judgments. But more is required; they will also have to acquire the disposition to act according to their understanding. They must do the right thing as well as have the right reasons. These two aspects of morality correspond to William Frankena's claim that moral education consists of both (1) handing on of moral knowledge about good and evil, of knowing how to act (and this can be conceived of as moral education proper), and (2) ensuring that children's conduct will conform to this knowledge (and this can be conceived of as moral training, if the appellation 'education' in this context seems out of place).<sup>74</sup> Both, in any case are required. They are required for moral reasons as well as pragmatic and pedagogical reasons. The moral reason is rather obvious.

To have moral knowledge without putting it into practice defeats the main point and purpose of morality which is to ameliorate the human predicament. In fact, it is a severe form of moral turpitude to know and not do. According to some views, the doing must stem from the appropriate attitude or disposition. Aristotle depicts the virtuous person thus:

We may use the pleasure (or pain) that accompanies the exercise of our dispositions as an index of how far they have established themselves. A man is temperate who abstaining from bodily pleasures finds this abstinence pleasant; if he finds it irksome, he is intemperate.<sup>75</sup>

## 2.6 The Nature of Religion and Religious Instruction

Religion, in its simplest form can be described as belief and worship of a transcendental being(s) popularly regarded as God or gods. Hudson in his own description of the 'religious' made two philosophical points about religious universe of discourse viz: 1. That it is logically constituted by the concept of god. By god, he meant transcendent consciousness and agency with which the believer as such has to do. The small 'g' of god is deliberately used to make it evident that religion as discussed herein is beyond just monotheism, animism, polytheism, monolatry as may be popularly thought. and 2. that the language in which religious belief is expressed has a certain complex character. The concept of god constitutes religious discourse in the same sense as that the concept of physical object constitutes physical science, or the concept of moral value constitutes moral discourse.<sup>76</sup>

Hudson posits that universes of discourse are logically constituted by concepts or sets of concepts which determine the presuppositions and the ways of reasoning in accordance with which the relevant kind of discourse proceeds. Anything thought or said within the discourse must (logically) be thought or said in terms of its constitutive concept(s). An illustration from the cases of physical science will be helpful to make clearer exactly what we want to establish about the concept of god and religious discourse. When people have religious experiences or arrive at religious explanations, it is because they have, so to speak, brought to the interpretation of what has occurred in the concept of god.<sup>77</sup>

A religious instruction will therefore be initiation into religious belief. This may require a little clarification to avoid confusion. There are all kinds of pursuits which may take religion as their subject-matter, e.g. history, psychology, sociology, philosophy. One can be educated in how to think in these varying ways about religious beliefs. But all such pursuits must be carefully differentiated from religious belief itself. It is of course not a misnomer in liberal education to initiate people into some, or all, of different ways of thinking about religious belief and as the mark of an educated man that he has some knowledge of them. This is regarded as education in religious belief as distinct from religious instruction which entails education and practice in particular faiths in schools. As such, initiation into religious belief will necessarily be initiation into theology and devotion. By theology, it means conceiving of god and thereby putting oneself in the way



of the explanations and experiences which this concept constitutes. By devotion, we mean engaging in those ways of committing oneself in trust and obedience to god which are characteristic of the expression of religious belief.<sup>78</sup> Religious instruction cannot adequately take place without embroiling those who receive it in abstruse or doctrinal controversies which are largely unintelligible to them. Religious instruction then can be referred to as provision which is made for education and practice in particular faiths in schools.<sup>79</sup>

In a simple illustration, physical science is a universe of discourse constituted by the concept of a physical object, i.e. a spatio-temporally identifiable particular which can be observed by physical sense. For physical science, the world consists of such objects and can be explained and experienced only in terms of them and their inter-relations. In fact, the physical objects which form science's subject-matter may be large or small in size. Again, they may be observable easily or only by means of highly sophisticated aids to sense. But the fact remains that unless any Y is a physical object, it cannot logically form part of the explanations which a physical scientist, as such, offers, or of the experiences which, as such, he has. In the same vein, morality is a universe of discourse logically constituted by a concept or set of concepts, namely moral values. If anything is explained within morality – e.g. what ought to be done- it must logically be in terms of this concept; and if anything is said to be a moral experience- e.g. a sense of guilt or a feeling of responsibility- it must logically be one which is available only to those who conceive of moral value. As such to conceive morality as synonymous with religion will both be abstruse and confusing.

Francis Nigel in his discussion of "The Biblical Theory of Christian Education" argues that Christian education demands instruction- in religion which teaches about the Creator. He insists that very broad and comprehensive instruction should be given in every aspect of learning- instruction in all of the main special sciences as lesser goals, in order to accomplish the great goal of subjecting God's entire world to His glory.<sup>80</sup> Buber sees religion as a personal and existential phenomenon which cannot be encapsulated in just abstract theories. He sees the originators of abstract religious theories as being especially responsible for the depersonalisation of religious meaning and for the consequent disillusion with which religion is regarded by the young. In his words,

The originators of such theories overlook the fact that religious truth is not a Conceptual abstraction but has existential relevance; that is, that words can only point the way, and that religious truth can be made adequately manifest only in the individual's or community's life of religious actualization.<sup>81</sup>

The point we are making from the above is that religious instruction requires personal faith and belief. Also, the major focus of religious instructor is how the spirit of religiosity can be nurtured and renewed. In religion, to be moral requires the help of supernatural being who mortals depend on to be perfect in conduct. It is beyond human ability to be moral. It is to this end that human righteousness is like a filthy rag. Religion considered humans to be corrupted even before birth and cannot lead morally upright life without the help of God. This is quite in contradistinction to moral education which is an informal public system that stands on human reason. Again, indoctrination remains one major strategy for presenting religious instruction in schools. Indoctrination is a form of teaching at its lowest level. It is associated with doctrines and dogma which connote an unquestionable body of beliefs meant to be swallowed and digested hook line and sinker. Indoctrination does not make itself amenable to any kind of challenge, review, consideration or panel beating. Of course, Iheoma rejects indoctrination as the major strategy for presenting religious instruction. She regards the term as pejorative.<sup>82</sup> But this to my mind is like denying the obvious. Most scholars acknowledge the inevitability of indoctrination as a strategy in religious instruction. According to Bertrand Russell, by the nature of religious doctrines and beliefs, indoctrination appears to be the only appropriate label for the method of presenting religious facts.<sup>83</sup> This is further confirmed when R. S. Peters writes: "... whatever else indoctrination 'may mean it obviously has something to do with doctrines, which are a species of beliefs',<sup>84</sup> and Passmore writes: "Indoctrination is a special form of drilling in which the pupil is drilled-e.g. by way of a catechism-in doctrines."<sup>85</sup>

Grant Nigel also in his view insists that: "As for the claims of other systems [i.e. those other than the Soviet system] to be non-political in aim, they are dismissed as 'hypocrisy and lies'. Most non-communist countries teach religion in their schools, that is, they indoctrinate the pupils with a particular world outlook;<sup>86</sup> Rodger Beehler in his article "The Schools and Indoctrination" argues that in indoctrinating someone-whether intentionally or not-through certain activities which might superficially be described as 'instructing' or 'teaching', implies making the person to come to believe something

unintelligently. The person being indoctrinated do not believe it on evidence which he appreciates is good evidence, which appreciation would involve an awareness of the sort of questions that would have to be asked and answered before the evidence could be accepted as even relatively conclusive. Beehler went ahead to highlight what a teacher can do in his class that will tend toward indoctrinating thus:

- (i) When he or she does not from the beginning seek to bring the students to appreciate the difference between a statement or opinion and the reasons there are for holding that belief or opinion.
- (ii) When he does not self-critically and openly display the justification for the beliefs or theories or judgments he calls the class to accept (together with the method of inquiry or confirmation in each case), inviting not only their attention to these but their critical assessment and discussion of them as well-producing himself (when they do not) the criticisms which have been or could be made of these beliefs or theories or judgments, together with the rival accounts given by others of the matters being addressed.
- (iii) When he does not actively seek to engage the student's intelligence throughout, in such a way as always to encourage-and frequently to require-the students to think on their own about what is being told or shown them, and to relate it to and assess it against what they already know.
- (iv) When he is not desirous of preventing indoctrination: when he does not have as a primary aim the students' achieving a capacity for independent thought and reasoning, and so a thoughtful relation to themselves, and to the human and natural worlds which are their environment.<sup>87</sup>

Consequently, in presenting religious education either through stories, lecturing or play acting there are traces mainly on faith in the supernatural being. The proof of the existence of this Being is not open to laboratory or empirical evidence. Furthermore, even when reasoning is applied to belief as in Descartes' '*Cogito ergo sum*', faith eventually triumphs over reasoning or logic in religion. Hence 'indoctrination,' whether pejorative or not, appears to be the approach to the teaching of religions and here is the basis for Beehlers' submission. In this passage "indoctrination" is used to refer to the inculcation of religious and political doctrines, among other things; further, this clearly shows that such activity stultify pupils capacity for independent thought by which he can arrive at his own opinion.

In practice and as method of teaching, indoctrination rules out the processes of rationalisation and individual reasoning. It hardly promotes objective conclusions or rational deductions. According to R.S. Peters, indoctrination rules out questioning of authority and sources of knowing.<sup>88</sup> Also it forbids suspension of belief and if according to Aristotle, rationality is the essence of man, indoctrination then alleviates the accidental and enduring quality of man. Logically therefore, the teaching of religion using indoctrination leads to production of non-rational and non-critical minds. And one possible reason is because religion hangs on faith and dogma. These basically are not the end products of education nor are they qualities desirable or expected from an educated person who has been exposed to some form of learning tasks and as a result should develop an integrated personality.

## **2.7 Moral Education Divorced from Religious Instruction**

To reassert our thesis for this chapter, we argued that moral education is and should remain divorced from religious instruction in our schools. That is, given the primary focus of moral education, we reject the substitution of religious instruction for moral education. This position is also strengthened by the realization and inclusion of moral education in the curriculum of some religious institutions; showing the importance of the separation of moral education from religious instruction. Even amongst Christians there is a growing number who think moral education should be divorced from religious education, and compulsory religious instruction and worship seem to grow yearly less justifiable in a religiously open society.

After this brief glance at some of the conflicting arguments, what should our own answer be to the two questions with which this chapter began? Let us begin with the first. It is hard to see how religious beliefs by themselves can give any guidance to the specific moral rules that should guide us. We are brought back to the old theologic problem: Religion tells us that we ought to act in accordance with the will of God. But is an action right simply because God wills it? Or does God will it because it is right? We cannot conceive of God's arbitrarily commanding us to do anything but the Right, or forbidding us to do anything but the Wrong. Are actions moral because God wills them, or does God will them because they are moral? Which, logically or temporally, comes first: God's will, or morality? There is a further theological problem. If God is omnipotent, how can his will fail to be realized, whether we do right or wrong? Then there is the practical ethical problem. Assuming that it is our duty to follow God's will, how can we know

what God does will, either in general or in any particular case? Who is privy to God's will? Who is presumptuous enough to assume that he knows the will of God? How do we determine God's will? By intuition? By special revelation? By reason? In the latter case, are we to assume that God desires the happiness of men? Then we are brought back to the position of utilitarianism. Are we to assume that he desires the "perfection" of men, or their "self-realization," or that they live "according to nature"? Then we are brought back to one of these traditional ethical philosophies— but purely by our own assumptions, and not by direct or unmistakable knowledge of God's will.

A hundred different religions give a hundred different accounts or interpretations of God's will in the moral realm. Most Christians assume that it is found in the Bible. But when we turn to the Bible we find hundreds of moral commandments, laws, judgments, injunctions, teachings, precepts. Often these teachings contradict each other. How are we to reconcile the Mosaic "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe" with Christ's Sermon on the Mount: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."<sup>89</sup>

## 2.8 Conclusion

We must come, then, to this conclusion that ethics is autonomous to religion. It is not dependent upon any specific religious doctrine. And the great body of ethical rules, even those laid down by the Fathers of the Church, have no necessary connection with any religious premises. We need merely point, in illustration, to the great ethical system of Thomas Aquinas. As Henry Sidgwick tells us, the moral philosophy of Thomas Aquinas is, in the main, Aristotelianism with a Neo-Platonic tinge, interpreted and supplemented by a view of Christian doctrine derived chiefly from Augustine when among moral virtues he distinguishes Justice, manifested in actions by which others receive their due, from the virtues that primarily relate to the passions of the agent himself, he is giving his interpretation of Aristotle's doctrine; and his list of the latter virtues, to the number of ten, is taken en bloc from the *Nicomachean Ethics*.<sup>90</sup> This great similarity in the ethical code of persons of profound differences in religious belief should not be surprising. In human history religion and morality are like two streams that sometimes run parallel, sometimes merge, sometimes separate, sometimes seem

independent and sometimes interdependent. But morality is older than any living religion and probably older than all religion. Hence, it will be logically and substantively absurd to rest the base of moral education on religion.

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## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>8</sup>.Some philosophers extend this argument to the well-being of lower animals. For instance, Tom Regan and Peter Singer (1976), *Animal Rights and Human Obligations*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.
- <sup>9</sup>.Barcalow, E. 1994. *Moral Philosophy*, Op. cit. 2.
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- <sup>14</sup>.Beauchamp, A and Childress, J.F. 2001. *Principles of biomedical ethics 5<sup>th</sup> ed.* Oxford University Press. 1.
- <sup>15</sup>.Richard J. 2001.*The Myth Morality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 3.
- <sup>16</sup>.James D. W. 1971. Moving toward the Clonal Man: Is This What We Want? *The Atlantic Monthly*; Volume 227; No.5; pp.50-53; and Emmett Barcalow, *op. cit.*, the last chapters where he dwelt on applied ethics. Some people think that *euthanasia* is morally permissible, terming it "mercy killing," since it presumably puts patients out of their misery and suffering; but others, such as Catholics, view it as outright "killing," since human life is sacred and should end naturally.

- <sup>17</sup>.Philip J. Nickel 2008. Ethical Issues in Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research, and various other contributions included in the anthology, *Fundamentals of the Stem Cell Debate: The Scientific, Religious, Ethical and Political Issues*, Kristen Renwick Monroe, et al. (Eds.); Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- <sup>18</sup>.John Dewey 1957. *Reconstruction in Philosophy*, Boston: Beacon, 163.
- <sup>19</sup>. David Hume, 1739/2003. *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Book III; Part I, Section I; New York: Dover, 325.
- <sup>20</sup>.Ibid. 326.
- <sup>21</sup>.Aristotle distinguished between *action* and *passion* as two principles of motion, one in the realm of *movement*, the other in the realm of *rest*, in his *Physics*, Book II; 1-4.
- <sup>22</sup>.This claim is highly arguable, to neuroscientists, who maintain that most mental phenomena, including moral judgments and decisions, involve an *activity* in different areas of the brain. Cf., for instance, Laurence Tancredi, *op. cit.*, 158.
- <sup>23</sup>.Irving M. Copi and Carl C. 1994. *Introduction to Logic* 9th ed. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 3.
- <sup>24</sup>.Ibid.
- <sup>25</sup>.David Hume, *Op. cit.* 326.
- <sup>26</sup>.Ibid.
- <sup>27</sup>.William K. Frankena, 1980. The concept of morality. G. Wallace & A.D.M. Walker Eds. *Op. cit.* 151.
- <sup>28</sup>.See Plato's *Euthyphro*, *Apology*, and *Crito*, translated by F.J. Church (1948); as reprinted in Oliver A. Johnson, *op. cit.*, 24.
- <sup>29</sup>.Barcalow, E. *Moral Philosophy*, *Op. cit.* 29.
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## CHAPTER THREE

### **Nigerian Educational System and the Problem of Moral Education**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter critically examines Nigerian educational system with a view to exposing the extent to which moral crises have enveloped the educational system in Nigerian society. It exposes the extent to which the moral crises have enveloped the society such that both the leaders and the led are implicated. The chapter will eventually locate this crisis amongst other factors, in the absence of consciously planned moral education programme in the Nigerian educational curriculum.

#### **3.2 The Nature of Contemporary Nigerian Society**

Nigeria, a geographical expression that came into being by the proclamation of the colonial governor, Lord Lugard of the amalgamation of Northern and Southern protectorates in 1914 has since been embroiled with the challenge of nation building. This challenge becomes more visible immediately after her independence in 1960. Though the country is richly endowed with natural resources and high quality human capital yet she is kept on her knees by the phenomenon of corruption. It is instructive to note that the phenomenon of corruption is a symptom of moral decay. To my mind, corruption is the tag epitomizing all forms of negative moral demeanour. That is why Lewis defines corruption 'as an impairment of virtue and moral principles'.<sup>1</sup> According to Ogbeidi corruption has been the bane of Nigeria's development. He argued that the phenomenon has ravaged the country and destroyed most of what is held as cherished national values. He went on to say that if corruption in the 1960s was endemic, corruption since the return of democracy in 1999 has been legendary.<sup>2</sup> The albatross of moral decadence is generating greater concern because of its pervading and destructive influence on a major segment of our society, namely, education. This concern is justified given the strategic position of education in any society. To this extent, our discourse will focus on Nigerian education with its contemporary challenges.

### 3.3 Analysis of Nigerian Educational System: Past and Present

As mentioned in previous chapter, education is regarded by scholars as a key component of personal development. It is the process of becoming the best people one can ever aspire to be in life. According to Akinyemi and Bassey, there is a high correlation between individual progress and education in modern societies. Hence, educated persons are more successful in life in terms of organising their lives and addressing daily challenges than non-educated ones. This is because the skills learnt in institutions of learning make them relevant in work organizations and businesses than illiterates.<sup>3</sup> However, the more people succeed in work settings and personal businesses the more society itself advances. Thus, no society can progress without adequate input of her manpower assets. It is high level human capital assets that drive the nations' economies and ensure rapid transformation.<sup>4</sup> The stock of highly-educated individuals produced by our educational institutions therefore, plays an important role in the moral gauge, innovation and sustainable development of any society.<sup>5</sup> In other words, education provides mankind with knowledge and information which could bring about desirable changes in the way they think, feel and act.

However, the attainment of these virtues depends on the contents of education, teaching methods and willingness of people to learn, coupled with positive moral character. Infact, positive moral character serves as the benchmark or yardstick for the success of other factors in ensuring societal advancement.<sup>6</sup> For example, Ademijimi views character in terms of the following six co-existent features: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. Good character is said to be in existence in societies or institutions, where the above features are constantly and positively exhibited while bad character manifest in milieus where the reverse is the case. From the colonial era and prominently from the military incursion into Nigerian politics, Ademijimi argues, Nigerian education system has been infused with negative characters, as clearly demonstrated in the plight of tertiary institutions today.<sup>7</sup> It is interesting to note that good moral character that used to be in existence and cherished in our educational institutions, prior to military incursion into politics, turned into bad character due to the militarisation of peoples' psyche, poor funding of education, poor remunerations and conditions of service for members of staff. In an attempt to survive, many manpower assets in academia migrated to greener pasture in their thousands while the majority of faculty and staff left behind continue to experience frustrating work environment that

undermine academic excellence. Gradually, students, parents, proprietors, security personnel and other workforce within the system joined forces and formed an unbeatable combination that makes all efforts in sanitising academia fruitless, leading to the current moribund education sector.

Scholars like Fafunwa, Anasi, Akinyemi from varied field of disciplines have expressed concern over the nose-diving of education in Nigeria. The prevailing moral dilemma has therefore become source of concern for everybody. The moral decadence is prevailing not only in the education sector but in many spheres of life in Nigeria. It could be argued that education can only be useful and meaningful when it empowers people to face life-challenging situations, resulting in positive changes in their lives. In recent times, it is often very difficult to differentiate between educated Nigerians and illiterates. Thus, many holders of degrees are not worthy in learning and in character as claimed by the institutions that awarded their degrees.<sup>8</sup> In other words, the process of securing education in Nigeria is faulty. Consequently, the education system is of little or no effect in handling day-to-day challenges of life, bringing to bear the view of Odion-Akhaine S, Sanyaolu K. and Chinua Achebe on Nigeria being rich but poor; has oil but imports the same at higher price to the detriment of poor masses; blessed with vast arable lands but imports her most basic foodstuff and her huge oil resources are being misappropriated, wasted and looted by the elite class.<sup>9</sup>

Ogbeidi in tracing the origin of this moral trouble argues that corruption and other vices in Nigeria predates the colonial era. Citing Colonial Government Report of 1947 and Okonkwo, it is claimed that “African nay Nigerian’s background and outlook on public morality is different from those of Britons. It is alleged that Africans in the public service seeks to further his own financial interest.”<sup>10</sup> In Ogbeidi’s submission, it appeared there were no men of good character in political leadership right from the First Republic in Nigeria.

The breakdown of values has greatly impacted negatively on all facets of life. Of great importance is the recognition that this decay is fast eroding our educational system. The moral decay in the educational system is worsened by the phenomenon of campus violence in its varied forms such as murder, rape, student unrest, examination malpractice, impersonation, forgery, just to mention but few. Hence, the moral vices such as corruption, injustice, bribery, sexual abuse and a general moral decadence which have pervaded all levels of political life, the civil service, education and health and

even the armed forces and the police are direct reflections of moral deficits of the Nigerian society.

The moral and value problems in Nigerian educational system which is also a reflection of the society and vice versa have continued to be a source of worry by scholars and other stakeholders. The loss of value both in our educational system and the society at large has undermined the academic tradition and made the goals of education unachievable. Tella, Okanlawon & Ossai were alarmed by the parlous state of moral decadence in our society when they asserted that "...it is now a general belief in Nigeria today and held by all sensitive citizens of this country that we are at a cross road, in dilemma as far as...morality is concerned. We should in fact recognize that there is moral "nightmare" in our country at the moment, about which we must all find means to do something positive"<sup>11</sup>

In the same vein, Obanya also lamented that Nigerian society has witnessed a radical shift in its value systems. The role model is no longer the *omoluabi* (a well-brought-up person), but the *omo jagidi jagan* (the person who simply tramples on the rights of others)<sup>12</sup>. In other words, learning for service to the enduring values of society has been replaced by learning for narrow personal interests and material empowerment. Obanya further noted the negative situation in Nigerian educational system thus:

Political instability and poor economic performance have produced the malignant phenomena of 'education for frustration', with a reigning mood of 'after schooling, what next?' The prevailing conditions in the education system therefore raise the following questions: Does Nigeria have clear societal development goals to which the goals of education can derive their inspiration? How best can Nigeria, through its education system, ensure that it correctly invests in the next generation?<sup>13</sup>

Many in Nigeria today are aware that we are living in an era of moral decline. Not only are our streets unsafe due to violence, criminality etc, but holders of public office are charged with serious breaches of ethics and public trust, young people engage in acts that display high level of moral bankruptcy. The breakdown of value system and the substitution of individualistic lifestyle for community living have negatively impacted on the Nigerian educational system. This loss of community is what Putnam dubbed "this precious and diminishing commodity *social capital*"<sup>14</sup>. This and some other factors have made the educational system in Nigeria not only weak but also dangerous. Nigeria is a

victim of the collapse of values, the politicians who steal public funds and live ostentatiously; the administrators who steal the funds meant for the education sector, the religious leaders who preach the message of miracles and prosperity and parents who are willing to help their children cheat in public examinations. We are in a society where majority of people no longer respect merit and hard work; but easy access and admiration to unaccounted wealth and culture of lawlessness and impunity. This can be seen in the rampant examination malpractices, inadequate funding and other negative acts.

At this point it is important to emphasise that there is a mutual intercourse between society and education. While the society creates and influences education, educational system perpetuates and regenerates the society. Hence, education remains the means to correct societal ills and its own failings. In this case, the general loss of positive values in our society is a product of the failings of our educational system and vice-versa. The problem of corruption and dishonesty in our public life are perpetrated majorly by the educated ones. As Aggarwal rightly puts it, “it is the students of today who are to be in charge of the various departments of life tomorrow.”<sup>15</sup>

The social and political failure of Nigerian state is not to be seen solely as the inability of Nigerians to effectively manage our political estate as a people but also in the endorsement of unethical or immoral practices as part of the political conduct in the country. A defining feature of African life appears to be the enthronement of political immorality which has ricocheted into all other spheres as a social norm among the people. Everywhere in the country, people are regularly being confronted with such vices as election frauds, political gerrymandering, and the manipulating of the democratic process by political actors. These arts of fraud have been perfected so much so that the people see it as normal. As Christopher Agulana puts it, “...the ideal of politics as an amoral (or even immoral) art is one that has been articulated, justified and even defended as part of political theory”<sup>16</sup> The amoral/immoral ideal as put forward by Machiaveli has wrought a lot of damage to both the psyche and moral outlook of Nigerians. This is further corroborated by Omoregbe when he pointed out thus:

Politics in Nigeria since independence has generally followed the Machiavellian line of separating politics from morality. We are made to believe that politics and morality do not go together, that once a person starts playing politics he must ignore morality. Hence we often hear it said that “politics is a dirty game” meaning that by its very nature politics involves the use of immoral means.<sup>17</sup>

The loss of the social and moral values has aggravated the foundations of social justice and harmony in the Nigerian society. Grievous crimes of unfathomable dimension occur in our society as a fall out of loss of moral values and attendant injustice in all strata of the society. Those who are favoured by the lopsided situation keep these advantaged positions by dubious activities while the disadvantaged are also exploring all possible avenues and morally repugnant means to escape their unfortunate station. This social malaise has successfully crept into the school system so much that all forms of misconduct are exhibited by students as a reflection of the society. Social relations among all ethnic groups are built on mutual suspicion and jealousy. Nigerian nation is bedevilled with the problem of unity despite consistent pronouncements on unity. Mere verbal pronouncement that unity is necessary in the Nigerian society sounds more like rhetoric with little or no impact. What is prominent and rampant among the people of Nigeria is mutual suspicion. Despite calls from both political and religious leaders, attention paid to unity among all ethnic groups in Nigeria is more or less cynicistic. As Isaac Olarewaju will argue, “Many politicians who are supposed to show the citizens the true meaning of unity, by example are just after their own self-interest.”<sup>18</sup> Chief Obasanjo puts it poignantly:

Nigeria was allowed to become a country where politicians wantonly practice the politics of ethnic and religious divisiveness, and where the responsible elite leadership thoughtlessly talk of the disintegration and dismemberment of the country whenever it suited their personal political whims and caprices.<sup>19</sup>

The endemic problem of moral corruption in Nigeria as already noted above among all ethnic groups has led to all forms of deprivation in terms of human rituals for the sole purpose of making money, assassination of human beings with impunity, election rigging, embezzlement of public funds, fraud in its varied forms- internet, obtaining money under false pretence. These societal malaise have impacted negatively on the school system such that the symptom of moral bankruptcy like rape, cultism, examination malpractices, nudity and gangsterism have become daily phenomenon in schools. At best in Nigeria today, education is defined in terms of certification and a means to embezzle public fund as we witness today. Majority of educated Nigerians who find themselves in the corridor of power embezzle with impunity and have continually displayed lack of moral rectitude. Recent revelations of mind boggling amount of money embezzled by officials in Jonathan administration keeps one puzzled. In its 2010 edition, the Human



Rights Watch reported that Nuhu Ribadu has estimated that between Nigeria independence and the end of military rule in 1999, more than US\$380 billion was lost to graft and mismanagement. The same publication also quoted the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) that “Nigeria leaders ‘stole’ \$380bn.”. This attest to what Chinua Achebe affirmed in his booklet, *An Image of Africa* thus:

The countless billions that a generous Providence poured into our national coffers in the last ten years...would have been enough to launch this nation into the middle rank of developed nations and transformed the lives of our poor and needy. But what have we done with it? Stolen and salted away by people in power and their accomplices<sup>20</sup>

Little wonder when the former president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo described members of the National Assembly as ‘rogues and crooks’. Nduka captures the scenario of how the system of formal education in Nigeria has failed. In his words, “Although the system of formal education which developed in Nigeria has turned out large numbers of people who had amassed a wealth of information and strings of degrees and certificates, it has by and large failed to produce a significant number of people who exhibit the scientific attitude and possess a critical turn of mind”<sup>21</sup>

An examination of the work of Daniel Jordan will definitely give a sober and somber picture of the level of moral condition of Nigerian society. Lewis quoted in Michael Ogbeyidi sees corruption as an “impairment of virtue and moral principles”<sup>22</sup> The phenomenon of corruption is understood as unethical behaviour which violates the norms of moral system. The level of political, social and economic corruption in Nigeria is huge that it naturally robs off as a norm in our educational system. Apart from wanton political killings in which the perpetrators remain unknown in the country, is also the phenomenon of rigging wherein political parties frantically attempt to outdo one another in rigging and ballot stuffing for their candidates. Also inherent in a political economy of patronage in Nigeria is the role that ordinary citizens play in the social reproduction of corruption, even as the vast majority of people are acutely aware that the system disproportionately benefits a few at the expense of the many. The most elite politicians, government officials, federal ministers, state governors, NNPC managers, major construction and petroleum industry contractors, and so on-commonly reap many millions of dollars through corruption. But people at many levels of society participate in corruption in order to survive. In a patron-client system, almost everyone has a stake in corruption, no matter how small. It is almost a cliché to recognize that in African societies, everyone is a patron

to a lesser person and a client to a more powerful person. As Olivier de Sardan notes "Woe betide the man who knows no one, either directly or indirectly...It is important to emphasize that in a country where the World Bank estimates that nearly 60 percent of the population lives below the poverty line of roughly one U.S. dollar per day, most people are not benefiting substantially from either the formal mechanisms of government or the more informal networks of patronage that constitute a significant proportion of the everyday political economy"<sup>23</sup>.

But even ordinary people have daily experiences with corruption in their efforts to forge better lives for themselves and their families, confronting and participating in everyday forms of corruption in offices, schools, and hospitals, and in a wide range of efforts to obtain basic services from the state. As much of the evidence presented in this research will attest, at the same time that Nigerians in ever larger numbers aspire to modern lifestyles, they become increasingly caught up in the paradoxes of corruption and its discontents. While the millions of very poor people in Nigeria are largely left out of the struggle for resources that occurs at the nexus of the state and the networks of patronage that vie to control it, in my experience even the extremely poor are remarkably aware of the fact that it is through the social connections of patron-clientism, and increasingly corruption, that people control wealth and power in Nigeria.

Closely related to the above is the widespread and multifarious form of moral degradation in the society. Among the Nigerian youths and adults are cases of financial scams. Most of these scams are done on the internet. Innocent people who are caught unaware are duped of money running to billions of dollars by Nigerians. This problem has made the international world to cast aspersion on the country so much that any Nigerian travelling outside the shore of the country is treated as criminal and subjected to rigorous search and scrutiny at entry points.

Another immoral monster ravaging Nigerian society is the phenomenon of Boko Haram insurgents. Of course, this evil, is a reflection of the society in terms of moral decay and insulation to the ideal of humanity. The abduction and killings of innocent people on the pretext of fighting for the cause of a particular faith is unbelievable. A recent startling revelation by former insurgent member, Sheikh Haliru who named some well placed Nigerians as the financial backbone of the sect claimed that in the name of fighting for Allah had killed several innocent people who they considered infidels. The sponsored insurgents were marked after going through the training by which they are

made to believe that they have “licence to kill for Allah”.<sup>24</sup> This dogma is a complete threat to humanity and a dehumanization of human dignity and sanctity of life. Religious extremism are symptoms of incivility and social maladjustment. This becomes more riddled when one considers the conspiracy of members of communities ravaged and the complications of some eminent personalities in keeping the phenomenon in shrouded secrecy. Other religious fraud pervades the societal landscape. For example, commercialization of churches, ritual killings, blood money, sales of human parts are common place in Nigeria. To worsen the case, perpetrators are never found. The above instantiate the awry level morality has gotten to in Nigeria.

All the moral challenges highlighted above are found in microscopic forms within our educational system. Beginning from the dichotomy between public and private schools in Nigeria, we see corruption epitomised. The quality of secondary schools and universities varies tremendously, creating fierce competition for the better institutions. In this environment of scarcity, corruption has become a major factor in the process of admissions. Once students are in school, we see a combination of severe shortages of resources, poor teacher salaries, and a growing acceptance that even education must be bought which has translated into extensive corruption in the educational system. The dimensions of vices in Nigerian educational system range from examination malpractice in schools to cultism, prostitution, armed robbery and misappropriation and embezzlement by school management are discussed. This discussion will carefully attempt a detailed overview of the malaise from the past to the present.

Let us begin our discussion from the albatross known as examination malpractice. This vice has relegated and made of little value certificates issued at different levels of education. This phenomenon does not exclude the primary and secondary school levels. This problem as a living organism accomplishes its growth and maturity at the tertiary level of our institutions of learning and thereby becomes a societal problem. It is important to note that students are not the only culprits; some older officials within the institutions collude with students to advance this vice.

Schools by tradition are assigned with responsibility to conduct examinations as yardstick for assessment. This responsibility is presumed to be the most practical way of assessment in education. For example, Balogun defined examination as the process through which students are evaluated or tested to find out the quality of knowledge they have acquired within a specified period.<sup>25</sup> Hornby also sees examination as a way to

ascertain how much of a subject matter in a particular field of study the candidate has mastered. Ironically, students make frantic efforts to deceive their examiners as to how much of quality knowledge they have acquired. This unfortunate trend has its historical antecedents to as far as 1914 and this has grown in alarming proportion till date without any sign of abatement. The only notable difference between the past and present in this wrong act is that while in the past the act was conducted in secret, in the contemporary period such act is done with impunity and in broad daylight. Ruwa traced back examination malpractice to 1914 during the Cambridge Local Examination papers which were leaked before the scheduled date of examination. He further reported that in the University of Maiduguri, about 25% of the students interviewed admitted to have engaged in one form of examination malpractice or another.<sup>26</sup>

Examination malpractice occurs in both internal and external examinations. In short, it has become an epidemic in the nation's educational system such that one is on a continuous basis inundated with reports of this vice. Yearly and on progressive mode, students devise new dimensions of examination malpractices. The instances of examination malpractices range from impersonation, leakage of questions, tampering with results, computer fraud to fraudulent practices by invigilators, officials and security personnel charged with supervising examinations. The federal military government in 1984, in an attempt to nip the problem in the bud promulgated Decree 20. An excerpt of the Decree cited by Fagbemi reads thus:

Any person who fraudulently or with intent to cheat or secure any unfair advantage to himself or any other person or in abuse of his office, produces, sells or buys or otherwise deals with any question paper intended for the examination of persons at any examination or commits any of the offences specified in section 3(2 7) (c) of this Decree, shall be guilty of an offence and on conviction be sentenced to 21 years imprisonment.<sup>27</sup>

Interestingly, Examination Malpractice Act 33 of 1999 revised the above decree but now stipulates punishment ranging from a fine of N50, 000.00 to N100, 000.00 and imprisonment for a term of 3-4 years with or without option of fine. This new development is due to the inability of the appropriate authorities to enforce the old Decree 20 of 1985. Unfortunately, despite all these laws, examination malpractice has continued unabated.

Another vice that has engulfed Nigeria educational system is what Amaechi Udefi describes as the problem of violence and gang-subculture. In his words:

...cultism has escalated to the extent that there is a network of members across the campuses of the nation's higher institutions unleashing mayhem, terror, disorder and violence on their victims. In fact the exhibition of beastly energy by these cult gangsters usually results in maiming, decapitation and death of their victims from a rival cult.<sup>28</sup>

What the above fails to capture is the presence of this evil at the secondary school level. Some students at this level have groups that foment trouble and sometimes have link with more mature cult groups of their choice. Also, the level of violence wrought by these cult groups often paralyses economic and social activities within their domain of operation. Recent events have even shown that cultists from our institutions are now initiating apprentices and young artisans. Closely related to this vice is the number of students caught in armed robbery operations. These armed bandits who are sometimes cultists engage in robbery so as to raise enough money to procure ammunitions for their deadly cult activities and to exhibit a level of affluence that can entice new members to their fold.

Another heart breaking vice raging in our institutions of learning like wild fire is prostitution. Ladies of different background across our institutions form themselves into groups and lay wait for men who can pay the fee for rounds of sexual intercourse. Oftentimes, these 'customers' are complete strangers. Sometimes there is a paid link who helps rich business men or politicians bring these girls to hotels or other places so arranged for a shameful revelry. On occasion some of these ladies fall victims to ritualists who entice them with money only to kill them and cut off their private parts for money rituals.

Stories abound of countless instances of corruption in secondary schools and universities, many of them cases that everyone except the most immediate beneficiaries would condemn without reservation, frequently using the language of 419. Each year, the Nigerian media report thousands of cases of exam malpractice, where students sitting for the JAMB and other national exams have purportedly purchased the test questions in advance from unscrupulous officials. Sometimes tens of thousands of students have their results withheld, and are forced to pay again and retake their exams, delaying their possible admission by a year, because a much smaller percentage of the test takers were

suspected of or caught cheating. Each step of a Nigerian student's education is fraught with obstacles that are best understood in the context of the country's pervasive corruption. In addition to the connections and bribes often required for admissions, secondary students are frequently forced to pay fees and levies that are obvious efforts on the part of teachers and administrators to supplement their incomes. Further, students are often forced to perform labour for school officials—for example, working on their farms, bringing them firewood, or carrying their water. While some of these practices fit within an older tradition where young people routinely perform chores for their elders, students and their parents resent this conscripted labour, but are afraid to protest because their children's school results could be affected if teachers are alienated. Stories of secondary school girls pressured or conned into sexual relationships with teachers in exchange for favourable treatment are also common.<sup>29</sup> The Nigerian contemporary society as painted above is thus characterized with high level of moral deficits such as gannsterism, hooliganism, assassinations, abductions, cheating, sexual abuse, examination malpractices, campus cultism, students' and youths' restiveness. Our society has become so decayed to a degree where we are close to Hobbes' 'state of nature', where life is brutish, short and nasty. As a result of this, individuals within the society live in fear. Though, the manifestations of these vices are not peculiar to our time, it has however in recent times assumes an alarming dimension. Both the old and young ones within the society are indicted in all these vices and what we may also call anti-social behaviour.

The questions that continuously agitate our minds is what will become the fate of education if these vices persist without seriously addressing them? What is the hope of making education achieve human development for positive social change? Udefi citing Olurode bluntly states the consequence of failure to address these problems:

Intellectual atrophy which in turn deepens underdevelopment and dependence...where violence prevails, lecturers and students feel readily intimidated and submit in fear to inferior logic. We can neither transmit knowledge nor generate it under conditions of violence, as might and not the intellect rules in such a setting of hooliganism and thuggery...if the university fails to deal with the problem, then hoodlums would take over the conduct of examinations and the award of degrees.<sup>30</sup>

The summary of the above overview of Nigerian moral state is that the level of moral vices is alarming and grave. Philippa Foot argued that vices are forms of evil, wicked and criminal actions or behaviours in the society. Vices are social problems and

have been thought of as social situations that a large number of observers feel are inappropriate and need remedying. Vices are those acts and conditions that violate societal norms and values. Its opposite, virtues in general are beneficial characteristics and ones that a human being needs to have for its own sake and that of its fellows. Of course, a critical look at this assertion of what virtues are may not take us far as there are many other qualities of a man that are similarly beneficial.<sup>31</sup>

According to Phillipa Foot, the thought that virtues are corrective does not constrain us to relate virtue to difficulty in each individual man. Since men in general find it hard to face great dangers or evils, and even small ones, we may count as courageous those few who without blindness or indifference are nevertheless fearless even in terrible circumstances. And when someone has a natural charity or generosity it is at least part of the virtue that he has; if natural virtue cannot be the whole of virtue this is because a kindly or fearless disposition could be disastrous without justice and wisdom, and because these virtues have to be learned, not because natural virtue is too easily acquired. And virtues as it were can be seen as correctives in relation to human nature in general but not that each virtue must present a difficulty to each and every man. For instance, there are bodily characteristics such as health and physical strength, and mental powers such as those of memory and concentration.<sup>32</sup>

At this juncture, we may pause to ask what exactly constitute virtue. In this sense, we may say that while health and strength are excellences of body, memory and concentration of the mind, it is the will that is good in a man of virtue. The question again might be, what do we mean by saying that virtues belongs to the will? In the first place we observe that it is primarily by his intentions that a man's moral dispositions are judged. If he does something unintentionally that is usually irrelevant to our estimate of his virtue. But this however must be qualified because failures in performance rather than intention may show a lack of virtue. This will be so when, for instance, when one man brings harm to another without realising he is doing it, but where his ignorance is culpable. Sometimes in such cases there will be a previous act or omission to which we can point as the source of the ignorance. Charity for example requires that we take care to find out how to render assistance where we are likely to be called on to do so, and thus, for instance, it is contrary to charity to fail to find out about elementary first aid. But in an interesting class of cases in which it seems again to be performance rather than intention that counts in judging a man's virtue there is no possibility of shifting the judgement to

previous intentions. For sometimes one man succeeds where another fails not because there is some specific difference in their previous conduct but rather because his heart lies in a different place; and the disposition of the heart is part of virtue.<sup>33</sup>

Thus it seems right to attribute a kind of moral failing to some deeply discouraging and debilitating people who say, without lying, that they mean to be helpful; and on the other side to see virtue *par excellence* in one who is prompt and resourceful in doing good. The bottom line of the above is that even when we cannot pin down the definition of virtues yet it is an essential attribute conducive to human relationships and societal survival. Again and in the same vein, Rand conceives virtue as the act by which we gain and or keep value. She also defines particular virtues such as integrity, honesty, justice et.al. For example, integrity “is the recognition of the fact that you cannot fake your consciousness”<sup>34</sup> a recognition that is expressed in loyalty to one’s rational values and convictions in the face of the contrary opinions of others.<sup>35</sup> And honesty “is recognition of the fact that you cannot fake existence,”<sup>36</sup> a recognition that is expressed in truthfulness in thought and speech<sup>37</sup> Justice is also defined by her as “the recognition of the fact that you cannot fake character of men as you cannot fake the character of nature, that you must judge all men as conscientiously as you judge inanimate objects, with the same respect for truth, with the same incorruptible vision, by as pure and rational a process of identification- that every man must be judged for what he is and treated accordingly...”<sup>38</sup> .What Rand meant by “you cannot fake the character of men” is not to deny that it is impossible to do so since this will amount to the impossibility of injustice, but that you cannot do so in the long run without detriment to yourself, to do so is disvaluable. Thus, recognition of the value of not faking various aspects of reality in thought and deed- or, in positive terms, of faking reality is implicit in virtuous action. When we act virtuously, whatever other values we might aim to bring about, we give expression to and, thereby, maintain the value we place on facing reality. In this sense, every virtuous action both maintains a value, and is a means to some value. This align with Rand’s general definition of virtue as the act by which we gain or keep value.

The value of honesty, integrity and justice are “higher order” virtues of rationality, productiveness, and pride, and this is connected to what Rand regards as the three cardinal values: reason, purpose, and self-esteem. These values, according to Rand is “the means to and the realization of one’s ultimate value, one’s own life”<sup>39</sup> as a rational being, and, therefore, one’s own happiness, conceived of as a “successful state of life”<sup>40</sup>



According to Rand, there is a hierarchy of values, as there is a hierarchy of virtues. There are the specific values connected to the different virtues, the three cardinal values, and the ultimate value, happiness. Putting Rand's definitions of virtue together, we can say that according to Rand, virtue consists of recognising various values as both means to, and part of happiness and acting to gain and /or keep them. However, Neera Badhwar argues that what is missing in Rand's fuller definition of virtue is the idea that a virtue is character trait, an enduring disposition or orientation that is expressed in virtuous acts.<sup>41</sup> According to Neera, Rand's novels illustrate that our moral responses reveal our characters- ourselves, our souls. And our characters consist not only of particular cognitions of value and actions motivated by such cognition, but also of general dispositions or tendencies to so cognize and act. Neera argues that this is not enough. Neera claims that recognition of values that is part and parcel of virtue cannot entirely be intellectual in nature but also include emotional dispositions. Neera goes on to affirm that rationality of virtuous dispositions and actions is a function of the intellect as well as of the emotions. What this implies is that virtuous acts are products of practical reason habituation. That is, virtuous acts are integration of intellectual and emotional dispositions. Hence, he argues that an adequate conception of virtue which will count as morally excellent must include:

1. Virtuous act must not only be motivated by a particular cognition and choice of the truly valuable, it must also express a standing disposition or habitual tendency to cognize and choose what is truly valuable. For an act that expresses a standing disposition is more deeply rooted- and, thereby, better- than an act that is merely motivated by a particular cognition.
2. Secondly, to count as excellent, virtuous traits must make us responsive to the morally relevant features of the situations we face. But someone whose emotional dispositions are at variance with her intellectual dispositions will often fail to notice the morally relevant or important features of a situation. And so she will be a less reliable moral agent than someone whose emotions are integrated with her intellectual convictions.<sup>42</sup>

The summary of our excursion into the concept of virtue or moral excellence is to drive home the point that virtuous acts requires cognition of what constitute morality along with the emotional prerequisite which are clearly outside the focus of religion.

Hence, to address the problem of vices requires conscientious efforts at educating the both young and old so as to develop their moral consciousness. While we accept that religion could enhance or promote morality in the sense that religion as part of human realities can reinforce moral behaviour but we argue that this will not make it take the place of moral education. This is further substantiated when Segun Ajiboye argues that religion promotes moral but it is not automatic because many religions can automatically promote immoral creeds and doctrines<sup>43</sup> For example, religion whose tenets are such that would make life worthless for people, encourage immoral acts or is against positive social values then such religion should be rejected.

### **3.4 The Place of Moral Philosophy/Education**

Weatherey argues that immorality is a state where one is not guided by the principles of morality, values and rectitude.<sup>44</sup> To have a grasp of what the principles of morality are, we must engage in moral philosophy. It is in this domain that we gain insight into investigation of human conducts wherein conducts can be said to be right or wrong. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and many other philosophers see moral philosophy as discipline which teaches us how to live a good life. Richard Rorty calls it the life of virtue in the society.<sup>45</sup>

Though the purpose of moral philosophy may differ according to the orientation of the moral philosophers concerned yet the overall aim is to put us in better stead to act in conformity with reasonable moral principles. No wonder R.M. Hare opines that the function of moral principles is “to guide conduct”.<sup>46</sup> Hence, if the function of moral principles is to guide conduct, the purpose of studying them would be to know them in order to conform our conduct to them. It is for this reason that Joseph Omoregbe defines moral philosophy as a normative science of human conduct for the purpose of guiding human conduct along the line of moral law. This position may however be contested. That is, it is not necessary to study moral philosophy in order to be able to live a good life that there are people who have never studied moral philosophy but who live lives of high moral standard. Of course, in a way this is not untrue. However, the systematic study is intended to help or assist elevate one’s moral standard. Moral Philosophy helps an individual to critically assess his accepted moral value against standard criteria or standard. William Lillie quoted by Omoregbe affirms that “a training in ethics/moral philosophy should enable us to see the defects in our own and other people’s conduct and

to understand their exact nature so that if the desire is there, we are better able to set things right in our own conduct and to make profitable suggestions to others”<sup>47</sup>

The place of moral education in the enterprise of educational activities cannot be overemphasised. The study of moral education is of great importance because it is in this study that questions of good and bad, right and wrong in human conducts are examined and thoroughly discussed rationally. Given the constitution of human beings as higher animals, there are kinds of action that are antithetical to their nature. These kinds of actions deprive these beings their happiness and flourishing also, there are other actions that promote and conducive to man’s happiness. The point we are making is that man has to behave in certain ways and refrain from behaving in certain other ways in order to attain internal and inter personal harmony, happiness and self-fulfilment. To achieve this, man is seen to be a moral agent; whose actions and that of others are consistently benchmark on moral standards. To live a moral life is the law of man’s own very nature and to throw this law to the dustbin and behave without regard to this law can never in the final analysis, be in man’s own interest. Such a behaviour would be foolish, short-sighted and self destructive. In the words of Wright Derek, the way of happiness is the moral way of life, that is, the way of life in compliance with the law of one’s nature.<sup>48</sup> And the sure way of going the way is through a systematic study of morality. In other words, morality is deeply engrained in man’s nature; far beyond this, the knowledge of morality helps in peaceful co-existence of men in the society.<sup>49</sup> Hence, morality as a systematic study helps in the correct discernment and apportionment of the moral knowledge in every man and in the society at large. Following from the above therefore, moral education entails the possession of the knowledge and teaching of moral philosophy. It is also a means to develop an individual intellectually in line with the aforementioned principles of right and wrong conducts in order to endow and awaken in him the consciousness and psychological ability to use his knowledge to achieve a balance in interpersonal relationship with other individuals and group. Again, the aim of moral education is to produce a complete educated man who would be useful to himself, his family, his immediate society and the nation at large. In this vein, education is seen as the inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes at different stages of development. It has been argued overtime by scholars of the place and importance of character training as essential at different stages of development for the upbringing of children. To this effect, we can posit that morality cannot be detached from education without grave

consequences. The survival of society is predicated on standards of behaviour and comportment which give meaning to existence.

Hence, morality is an essential and indispensable factor of life. In essence, moral education aids in achieving the inculcation of the right attitude and values for appropriate character development in individuals at all levels of education. Moral education remains a veritable weapons to combat all the ills ravaging our society.

### **3.5 Moral Education and its Place in Nigerian Educational System**

A cursory look at Nigeria educational policy in Nigeria reveals a surprising inattention to moral education. Despite the significance and importance of moral philosophy through moral education offers to a society which abhors all manners of moral and social ills, it is surprising that Nigeria pays little attention to the proper place of moral education in its policy. While it is noteworthy to point out that the National policy on education enunciates the following values:

- i. Respect for the worth and dignity of the individual
- ii. Faith in man's ability to make rational decisions
- iii. Moral and spiritual principle in inter-personal and human relations
- iv. Shared responsibility for the common good of society
- v. Promotion of the physical, emotional and psychological development of all children; and
- vi. Acquisition of competencies necessary for self reliance.<sup>50</sup>

While the above may clearly show the significance of moral values in education, it is painful to note that the process required to entrench the values are completely left out. The argument is that moral education which remains a cardinal medium or channel to transmit or raise awareness of these values in a rational and objective manner was completely left out as a core subject. What we only have instead is religious education, which at best remains optional and of course not on the same pedestal and relevance with moral education.

That is, mere listing of educational policy or philosophy is not enough. The business of moral education in our educational system as averred by Udefi requires a conscious inculcation and formation of virtuous habits, free rational choice of principles as opposed to authoritarian or dogmatic obedience. The achievement of the articulated

ethical values requires detachment from associated dogma peculiar to religion. The role of moral education in the production of critical mass who have ‘critical and detached perspectives to assist in the discussion of strategic options and the reinforcement of humanistic perspectives, and to be able to speak out on ethical, cultural and social problems and in full awareness of their responsibilities, exercising a kind of intellectual authority that society needs to help it to reflect, understand and act.’<sup>51</sup>

I think it is wise and expedient to briefly take an historical detour so as to highlight the marriage of inconvenience between religion and moral education. At the turn of 19<sup>th</sup> century when slave trade had been sanctioned as illegal and subsequent freedom and deportation of erstwhile slave back to Sierra-Leone, and the immediate emergence of colonialism, missionaries started to flood African continent with the primary aim of proselytizing and converting the natives to Christianity. This was however found by the missionaries to be incomplete if the converted natives will not be able to read and write. As such, priests in the local churches were commissioned to double up as teachers. To this, the church was used as schools during the week. Infact, the curriculum of school was basically reading, writing, Christian religious knowledge and handicraft. Later, geography, history and Latin were added to the curriculum. Unfortunately, the content of geography and history taught was purely European. In the words of Babs Fafunwa:

The primary objective of the early Christian missionaries was to convert the ‘heathen’ or the benighted Africa to Christianity via Education. Knowledge of the Bible, the ability to sing hymns and recite Catechisms, as well as the ability to communicate both orally and in writing, were considered essential for a good Christian...The earliest Christian missionary school in Nigeria was without any-doubt an adjunct of the church.<sup>52</sup>

By 1882 the colonial government in British West African Colonies after series of failed spasmodic attempts to articulate educational policy, the first education ordinance was promulgated. The 1882 education covered the British West African territories of Lagos, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and Gambia. There were about ten provisions of the ordinance wherein government schools and assisted schools were to be guided. One fundamental provision was “freedom of parents as to religious instruction of their children”<sup>53</sup> This provision was retained in the 1887 education ordinance when Lagos was separated from the Gold Coast administration. This particular item in the ordinance

emphasizes safeguards as to religious and racial freedom. By 1920 Phelps-Stokes Commission also known as the African Education Commission was set up to enquire as to the educational work being done so far by both the missionaries and colonial government, to investigate the educational needs of the people in the light of the religious, social, hygienic and economic conditions and to ascertain to what extent these needs are being met. After the commission had concluded its work, the first recommendation as to a clearly defined objectives of education is ‘the development of character’<sup>54</sup> Again, by 1967 Western State Government appointed Taiwo Commission whose terms of reference included finding measures necessary for “raising the academic standard...and the moral stamina of our youth”<sup>55</sup>

The point we are trying to make from this brief historical overview is the continuous gap in providing moral education for our young ones. The efforts of the missionaries in pioneering Western education in West Africa nay Nigeria is not in any way undervalued but that there was great restraint in making religion appealing to parents. Many parents refused that their children be taught in Christian Religious knowledge. In fact Fafunwa commented that to many native parents education of their children in missionary schools was to afford them material benefit, “In spite of the early Christian schools, both parents and pupils saw education as a means of social emancipation and an avenue for economic improvement.”<sup>56</sup> And the reason for rejection of religion as basis for moral education is clear. Though not in anyway articulated, religion as primordially doctrinal run foul of some African beliefs and as such received very hostile attention.

The likely problem of conflation of religious instruction with moral education may be traced to how these two different subjects with different focus are continuously put together in the National Policy. The policy says “moral and religious instruction will be taught in schools...”<sup>57</sup> This lumping has given the impression that morality is totally captured and encapsulated in religious instruction. Whereas, religious instruction could be taught to address the spiritual dimension of man, while moral education touches on rational and moral considerations in human relationships in all its shades. Such considerations require openness, non-dogmatism and acceptance on all individuals concerned. Religion from whichever perspective one is looking at it fails to provide generally acceptable platform to discuss moral issues because religious position is not subject to scrutiny and the position of one religious group often differ from the other.

Also the first requirement in religion is acceptance of some unquestioned dogma of faith and those who do not hold such dogma will find it difficult to be at home with such religious moral code. As such religion cannot provide this platform because “no child will be forced to accept any religious instruction which is contrary to the beliefs and wishes of his parents”<sup>58</sup> This aspect of the national policy is in tandem with the secular posture of Nigerian constitution.

### 3.6 Conclusion

What one may deduce from our discussion so far is that moral issues have remained a thing of concern over the years. Religious knowledge which many scholars have referred to as the answer has always been in the curriculum without any notable impact. Infact, apart from non-acceptance by some parents to allow their children offer such subject, consistent disunity and evident moral disequilibrium among many religious leaders leave one in doubt of its efficacy. According to Fafunwa,

...each denomination emphasized its own importance and spared no pains to prove that one denomination was better than other. Consequently, right from the advent of Christianity in Nigeria, dissension and disunity were rampant among the Christian missions and, to the bewildered Africa, it was hard to believe one white mission would discredit another white Christian mission in a desperate attempt to win convert and send glowing reports back to the home mission.<sup>59</sup>

One Nigerian scholar who had strongly pushed for religious instruction as a vital tool of moral probity in schools is Isaac Olanrewaju. Ironically, his position became indefensible because those who have received full dose of religious instruction are not only disunited but are seriously caught up in the web of immorality. According to Olanrewaju,

From our investigation of religions and religious leaders, we cannot expect much from them because they are one of the agents that are causing disunity in our nation by their callousness and wrong attitude to reality.<sup>60</sup>

The above can be closely related to what Fafunwa said earlier. A religious leader is not necessarily going to be a worthy moral agent. Instances have clearly shown that some religious people are not good moral agents. Infact, a damning statement by Chinwe in *The Sun Newspaper* as cited by Olanrewaju confirms our position:

Immorality has cropped into the very house of God, which ought to be the citadel of Godliness and righteousness. That is the more reason why we have many churches as well as many sinners today.<sup>61</sup>

Another important point to note in the foregoing is the growing interest by religious institutions to add moral education to their curriculum. In a survey research carried out by Perry found out that religion scholars have found out that moral education has great influence on moral understanding and moral probity of students. As such, this subject should not remain an appendage of religious instruction. In his words,

Survey research of faculty attitudes at universities and colleges has provided some evidence that religious colleges and universities either resisted the marginalization of moral and civic education or have heeded the call to once again make it a priority<sup>62</sup>.

According to Akinpelu, religious instruction and religious bodies are “more concerned with restoring doctrinal purity as if religious fundamentalism or fanaticism (to call it its real name) is a substitute for good moral education.”<sup>63</sup> Religious instruction has always failed to provide solid foundation upon which to erect moral structure. People who got education with high dose of religious knowledge have been seen to be morally weak. Nduka describes them thus:

On the face of it at least, the emphasis on character development is commendable. What is not so certain is that the often excessive religious indoctrination, especially with varying denominational emphasis, is a guarantee of eventual moral probity on the part of the products of the system. Infact the Nigeria case seems to belie any such claim. On the contrary, the very leaders and people, whose social and political activities manifested themselves in the form of moral miasma of the First and Second Republics, including the intervening civil war, were mainly those who had received high doses of religious indoctrination and moral instruction in either Christian mission schools or the parallel Muslim educational institutions. It is they who have perpetrated the various acts of fraud, election and census riggings, all forms of bribery and corruption and ruined the national economy. Worse still, instead of remaining in the country and manfully facing the consequences of their iniquities and, possibly, helping to salvage the economy, they have run away to foreign countries to enjoy their ill-gotten wealth.<sup>64</sup>



To this extent, moral education is left missing in the Nigerian curriculum. This unfortunate negligence is exactly what Herbert Spencer pointed out in his article “On Moral Education” that on most occasion preparation for the bringing up of children are considered unnecessary by adults. He argues that in the absence of this preparation, the management of children and more especially the moral management is lamentably bad. In his words:

While it is seen that for the purpose of gaining a livelihood, an elaborate preparation is needed, it appears to be thought that for the up bringing up of children, no preparation whatever is needed. In the absence of this preparation, the management of children, and more especially the moral management, is lamentably bad.<sup>65</sup>

Moral education is not what is left to chances and feelings. It requires deliberate and reasoned out conceptions of what moral conduct: right and wrong are. Proper conduct in life is much better guaranteed when the good and bad consequences of actions are rationally understood rather than they are merely believed on authority of religion or parents. To do this requires a moral framework. According to Wilson, a framework of rules and conditions is essential as the foundation of learning what is ‘right’ or ‘wrong’. He argues:

The child needs other things, such as love, emotional security, food, warmth, enough sleep and so on. All of these things as well as a framework of rules are necessary<sup>66</sup>

Moral education in this sense requires that children are shown as early as possible to recognize the societal influences and to give them a foundation on which they can rationally make judgements as they encounter each moral variant within the various societal spheres. Musgrove says that moral education:

Must, therefore, take account of the way in which these choices seem to be made. Attention must be given to the knowledge needed, the relevant structures to be used, the skills necessary for interpreting the thoughts, feelings and actions of others involved, and to the process of weighting used by moral actors as they balance these elements<sup>67</sup>

Obviously a child can only be taught what he is capable of learning at any stage in his development, but this type of education requires both avenues to discuss moral issues with an hindsight and also an all the time type of instruction where everybody is both learner and teacher with whomever they interact. Thus:

All morality consists of relationships between persons; that its three concerns are therefore, self, others and the relationship between them; and that the heart of morality is therefore respect for persons. [The child's concept of a person] does not have to be learnt as such, [but] it does have to be built up by moral education in terms of knowledge, habits and attitudes<sup>68</sup>

The objective base of moral knowledge and variety of interactions will help a child develop a moral sense. A narrow and parochial range of experience leads to rigidity, stultification and stagnation in moral development as only one variant is being encountered and moral process is not being developed along with moral content. Whilst one needs to be in place to a certain extent before the other can function, they do need to run alongside one another at later stages in the child's development. Bull, Straughan and Wilson all opine this in their different works. For instance, Bull says that:

The practice of virtuous action therefore involves three conditions: Conscious knowledge of it, deliberate will of it 'for its own sake, and an 'unchangeable disposition to act in the right way', Moral education must clearly be concerned with all three<sup>69</sup>

Straughan is more pungent when he argues that:

What determines the level of moral development a person is at is not the particular action he judges to be right or wrong, but his reasons for so judging<sup>70</sup>

Wilson in his submission simply says that 'moral concepts involve the notions of 'intention', of 'understanding', and 'knowing what you are doing'<sup>71</sup> Our position is that, given the centrality and importance of moral education to raising the moral consciousness of people and thereby assisting them to shun some moral ills, moral education should be introduced as a core subject from the pre-primary level to primary, through tertiary and even adult literacy programme. The reason for this continuum is that man by nature needs a continuous moral formation and reawakening till he enters the grave so as to disable him from relapsing to animalism. Moral education is a continuous process of character formation. And it is through it we can get the ills in our society mitigated to a barest level minimum. It follows from the above that we urgently require a modification in our curriculum to accommodate moral education imbued with our cultural reality as a core subject at all levels.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### ARISTOTLE'S THEORY OF VIRTUE

#### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we examine Aristotle's theory of virtue with a view to identifying cardinal elements necessary to build a viable moral education programme. This chapter highlights the interconnection of intellect and emotions and culture in the formation of habit and subsequently a virtuous citizen within the society. Also, we argue that Aristotle's moral theory of virtue is a better means of developing and engendering moral virtue in agents and in assisting to develop moral reason. We thus argue that moral education begins with "habituation" of moral agents especially from childhood and this is followed up by rational discourse on moral issues. It is this attempt that can assist in reversing the present trend within Nigerian educational circle and thereby aid moral reawakening among our youths in particular and adults in general.

#### 4.2 Aristotle's Account of the Development of Moral Virtue

Aristotle's viewpoint about the good life requires moral excellence as an integral part. According to him, excellence of character is the excellence of that part of the soul which does not itself reason, but is capable of listening to reason: it is a *hexis* of desires and feeling. Possession of this excellence, along with that of the reasoning part, enables an individual to perform his *ergon* (function) and thereby to attain *eudaimonia*. The person who is morally excellent exhibits a unity of thought and desire which ensures that he acts according to reason. Given the importance of moral excellence with respect to the human *ergon* and, therefore, to *eudaimonia*, we may safely claim that Aristotle was interested in the process of moral education, which would help people to achieve excellence of character.

Before moving to Aristotle's arguments about the exact nature of moral excellence, one of the assumptions underlying Aristotle's analysis should be discussed. He assumes throughout the ethical works (and in the *Politics* as well) that people will only be able to achieve moral excellence and of course *eudaimonia* in a community. He claims that humans are by nature social – relations with others are important to them – and that they will live in communities, "...by self-sufficient we do not mean that which is sufficient for a man by himself, for one who lives a solitary life, but also for parents, children, wife, and in general for his friends and fellow citizens, since man is [political] by nature."<sup>1</sup> Aristotle's discussion of friendship confirms that he believes humans to be

social. He states that no one would choose to live without friends, even if he had all of the other goods. In the *Politics*, Aristotle explains that the state arises naturally because humans naturally form relations with others.<sup>2</sup> The good life Aristotle describes, then, will be one which takes place in a community and which includes ties to and relationships with other members of the community. According to Aristotle, the state plays an important role in promoting moral excellence and the good life. Aristotle includes his treatment of the good life for individuals as a sub-discipline of the more general discipline of politics, which is about the end of states. This classification presupposes that one of the ends of the state is to promote the good of the individual. This connection between ethics and politics is reinforced in the last chapter of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, where Aristotle follows Plato's approach in the *Laws* and refers questions of the education of children to the legislation of the state which is treated in the *Politics*. In the *Politics*, Aristotle states that the goal of his inquiry is to consider what kind of community is best for those who are most able to realize their ideal life.<sup>3</sup> He later repeats that the state exists for the sake of the good life of its citizens. These statements about the goal of the state, with the remarks that Aristotle makes in the ethical treatises about man's social nature, indicate that he believes that society will have an important influence on the quality of life the individuals in it lead. Because of the nature of political science, which aims at creating good societies in order to help individuals live virtuous lives, states exercise a normative influence on the lives of their citizens. The laws and culture they establish will be created with an eye to promoting *eudaimonia* and will set standards for behaviour. According to Aristotle, we can therefore expect a good society, which sets the right standards, to exert a positive influence on moral development. In fact, he presupposes such a society in his treatment of moral education.

Following from the above, it is important to point out that Aristotle's account of the development of moral virtue is complex. Complex because his account goes beyond identification of one human element as being implicated in the development of moral Virtue. While other scholars like David Hume will want us to believe that emotions is the principal element in morality, Kant insists that reason is the only element that is important in morality. In fact, to Kant, emotion is seen as an unruly element to be banished in moral theory. Aristotle emphasizes the crucial place of both reason and emotions and the state or community in his moral theory. In a bid to do this, he distinguishes between moral and intellectual virtues, but he equally holds that no one is fully virtuous or has true moral virtue without having the intellectual virtue of practical



wisdom, and he holds that no one can become practically wise without first possessing natural or habitual moral virtue. This interdependence is grounded on the premise that human agents are a union of intellect and emotions. This interdependence between the intellectual and moral virtues are exceedingly important to Aristotle's theory of virtue and the human good, and my purpose here will be to identify and explore their significance for moral education.

Aristotle distinguishes moral and intellectual virtues but he also asserts the double-edged thesis that practical wisdom both presupposes and completes moral virtue. In taking this position he follows Plato in rejecting the moral intellectualism of Socrates, while also preserving the doctrine of the unity of virtue. Virtue 'in the strict sense' involves practical wisdom, and this explains:

Why some say that all the virtues are forms of practical wisdom, and why Socrates in one respect was on the right track while in another he went astray; in thinking that all the virtues were forms of practical wisdom he was wrong, but in saying they implied practical wisdom he was right...[I]t is...the state that implies the presence of right reason, that is virtue; and practical wisdom is right reason about such matters. Socrates, then, thought the virtues were forms of reason (for he thought they were, all of them, forms of knowledge), while we think they involve reason. It is clear, then...that it is not possible to be good in the strict sense without practical wisdom, nor practically wise without moral virtue. But in this way we may also refute the dialectical argument whereby it might be contended that the virtues exist in separation from each other; the same man, it might be said, is not best equipped by nature for all the virtues, so that he will have already acquired one when he has not yet acquired another. This is possible in respect of the natural virtues, but not in respect of those in respect of which a man is called without qualification good; for with the presence of the one quality, practical wisdom, will be given all the virtues.<sup>4</sup>

Practical wisdom entails the presence of all the virtues because although one may have some natural or habituated virtues in some degree without having them all, if one lacks the perceptions associated with even one form of virtue, then one's perception of moral particulars, conception of the proper ends of action, and deliberations about what to do will all be corrupted in at least that one respect. There will be situations in which the emotions associated with the missing form of virtue will be felt too strongly or weakly and will lead one astray.

Moral virtues thus come to be defined as dispositions to feel and be moved by our various desires or emotions neither too weakly nor too strongly, but in a way that moves

us to choose and act as reason would dictate, and allows us to take pleasure in doing so. Intellectual virtues are later defined as capacities or powers of understanding, judgement, and reasoning which enable the rational parts of the soul to attain truth, the attainment of truth being the function of the calculative or practical part no less than the scientific or contemplative one.

Having drawn this distinction between the intellectual and moral virtues at the end of Book I, Aristotle opens Book II with a remark about the origins and development of virtue, which contrasts these forms of virtue in a way that would seem quite significant for the enterprise of moral education:

Virtue, then, being of two kinds, intellectual and moral, intellectual virtue in the main owes both its birth and its growth to teaching... while moral virtue comes about as a result of habit, ...none of the moral virtues arises in us by nature.<sup>5</sup>

Aristotle introduces *phronesis* as an intellectual virtue (virtue of thought) that serves the moral virtues; for while the moral virtues make 'the goal correct', *phronesis* 'makes what promotes the goal (correct)'.<sup>6</sup> This intellectual virtue helps the moral virtues find their right ends and the suitable means to their ends. More specifically, *phronesis* 'is a state grasping the truth, involving reason, concerned with action about what is good or bad for a human being'.<sup>7</sup> We cannot be 'fully good' without *phronesis*, nor can we possess *phronesis* without virtue of character.<sup>8</sup> When a moral agent is stripped of the virtue of character, *phronesis* degenerates into a mere cunning capacity. Aristotle calls this 'cleverness'. Cleverness involves the capacity to act or react in such a way as to promote whatever goal is assumed and to achieve it. If the goal is fine, cleverness is praiseworthy, and if the goal is base, cleverness is unscrupulousness; hence, both the *phronimoi* (persons exhibiting *phronesis*) and the unscrupulous can be called clever.

To this extent, to exhibit *phronesis* does mean that every moral problem is addressed through a long period of reflection and deliberation. Even when virtuous agents must act quickly or instinctively; what matters is to what extent previous decisions, informed by *phronesis*, have become ingrained in their characters and can guide them automatically to the right actions and feelings. Talking about right actions and feelings as already hinted above are crucial because they form distinctive features of Aristotle's virtue theory. Emotions, as will soon be discussed are as important as the actions pursued by a virtuous agent. According to Aristotle, emotions have an 'intermediate and constitute best condition [...] proper to virtue' –when they are felt 'at

the right times, about the right things, towards the right people, for the right end and in the right way' If the relevant emotion is 'too intense or slack', we are badly off in relation to it, but if it is intermediate, we are 'well off'.<sup>9</sup> And persons can be fully virtuous only if they are disposed to experience emotions in this medial way on a regular basis. It is to be noted that, strictly speaking, specific episodic passions do not constitute virtues any more than individual actions do.

To attain moral excellence, Aristotle is of the strong view that the moral educator begins to cultivate natural excellence, along with the student's teleological orientation to the good. To Aristotle, moral educator's task is primarily of guiding, refining and informing those dispositions with which a person is born. The moral educator does not have to persuade his students to seek the good life, but must show them what this life is. It is important to note that showing students what the good life consists in is a complex task. Because of the complex nature of the soul, the process according to Aristotle involves more than just an intellectual demonstration of the best life. The moral educator must also find some way to orient the non-rational parts of the soul towards the good life and thus to bring thought and desire into harmony. With the natural excellences, the child begins from a positive position - his charges are not neutral with respect to excellence, but rather have an inborn inclination toward it.

The theory of moral education we can extract from Aristotle's theory of virtue is one which utilizes naturally occurring aspects of human nature and behaviour, as well as a positive social context, to influence the process of moral development and orient the soul toward the proper ends. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle explains that humans are adapted by nature to receive moral excellence, but that it must be perfected by habit. Aristotle draws on the inherent rationality of humans and on three behavioural influences viz: filial relations, the desire for honour and desiring to avoid shame, and the desire for pleasure in his theory of moral education. These attributes help the moral educator to influence behaviour and thus to guide development. With the exception of rationality, all of these factors occur in and exert direct influence upon the affective part of the soul. As the subsequent discussion will show, character development and cognitive development go hand in hand for Aristotle, a phenomenon which led Nancy Sherman to term the process of moral education one of "critical habituation."<sup>10</sup>

### **4.3 Salient Features of Human Nature and Behaviour used in the process of Habituation**

There are several aspects of human nature and behaviour which are implicated in moral education: the natural rationality of humans, the desire to achieve honour and to avoid shame, the desire for pleasure, and natural relations with friends and family which serves as the purveyor of communal values. In this part of the chapter, I will examine each of these individually, focusing on how it exerts influence on an individual and his actions. I will attempt to discuss the way each of these emotional factors works in isolation from the others. We must however bear in mind that they do not affect an individual sequentially and that more than one impulse can be operative at a time. Thus, for example, a single action might reflect the desires to win honour and to please one's parents. These factors facilitate the changes that take place during the process of habituation by giving the moral educator influence over the student. They do not themselves constitute part of habituation. The moral educator can use a person's desire for honour to motivate him to learn more about the requirements of, e.g., temperance. The activities which promote learning and character changes constitute habituation; the desire for honour simply facilitates it. In the second part of the chapter, I will look at how these facts about human nature and behaviour work together to effect moral development.

#### **4.3.1 Reason**

Element of reason plays a very significant role in Aristotle's theory of virtue. Though scholars disagree on a seemingly incoherent account of the role Aristotle assigned to reason in *Eudemian* and *Nicomachean ethics* as to the true relation of reason/wisdom (*phronesis*) has to emotions or character. Intellectualism as championed by Terrence Irwin plays down the role of emotions as just being a motivating factor. Reason or wisdom on his account specifies for the good person, all determinate goals and all means; goodness of character is simply that in virtue of which good person desires to follow such directives.<sup>11</sup> In the same vein, David Wiggins opined that Aristotle's view is that we can deliberate 'a man's total end, namely happiness' so as to answer 'the question "what, practically speaking, is this end?"'<sup>12</sup> In contrast to the intellectualist interpretation of Aristotle is William Fortenbaugh's claim that moral virtue, also known as goodness of character is independent of wisdom/reason. According to him wisdom is required only when the action so indicated by moral virtue cannot, or would not suitably

or best, be performed at that moment- so that some planning, deliberation and forethought is required. That one should be able to engage in such forward planning well is, of course, not an inconsiderable matter: on it may well depend whether a practical good eventually is secured. Hence such deliberative excellence really is necessary for moral virtue in the full sense. However, in many situations, indeed in all where action is immediately required, wisdom is superfluous.<sup>13</sup> Fortenbaugh thus clearly plays down the role of intellect in ethics in precisely the way that intellectualists denounce.

Our own interpretation of Aristotle follows the line of thought of D. Smith- a complementary interpretation of the role of reason/practical wisdom and emotions. According to Smith, searching for an understanding of moral virtue entails following of reason and yet as prior to deliberative wisdom and also as informed by the idea of being motivated by what is fine: 'The fair person who lives with a view to the fine will obey reason, the base person who grasps at pleasure is to be held in check by pain like a beast of burden.'<sup>14</sup> What we mean by this is that virtuous actions require rational deliberation and habituation of humans from childhood such that he can effectively act rightly and consistently.

The natural rationality of humans serves as an important resource for the moral educator. According to Aristotle, people possess the natural ability to reason and to learn about both particulars and universals. According to this discussion, humans naturally possess those capacities (memory, experience and judgment) required to generalize from experience and to develop knowledge. Aristotle clearly affirms that there are two types of reasoning, experience and art (*technai*) which are about individuals and universals respectively:

... experience is knowledge of individuals, art of universals, and actions and productions are all concerned with the individual .... But yet we think that knowledge and understanding belong to art rather than to experience, and we suppose artists to be wiser than men of experience ... because the former know the cause, but the latter do not. For men of experience know that the thing is so, but do not know why, while the others know the "why" and the cause.<sup>15</sup>

In the case of moral excellence, we will be concerned primarily with the ability to reason correctly about individual circumstances and hence with knowledge from experience. Reasoning about universals and knowledge of causes may also be helpful in coming to understand the end and in anchoring particular judgments. Aristotle refers to the natural reasoning ability of humans in several places in the ethical works. In

*Nicomachean Ethics*, he notes that although people are not thought to be wise by nature, but they are thought to possess judgment, understanding and comprehension by nature; he remarks that knowledge is correlated to age in addition to the natural desire for explanations and to understand how things work. Thus, the student will seek to understand which actions are excellent and why they are so. This implication of rationality comes across perhaps most clearly in the opening chapter of the *Metaphysics*. Here, Aristotle begins with the assertion that "[a]ll men by nature desire to know"<sup>16</sup> Aristotle states that there are two kinds of knowledge (knowledge of individuals and knowledge of universals) and that humans tend to move from individual experiences to universal judgments. He also remarks that those who grasp universals and therefore know causes are considered to know in a truer sense and to be wiser than those who know particulars. Thus, although experience is more relevant to action, knowledge of causes and universals is considered superior with respect to knowledge. The desire to know referred to in the opening line of the *Metaphysics* as a desire natural to all people means that the student will naturally attempt to determine the causes for things and that he will generalize from his experience. Students have a natural curiosity about things and why they are the way they are and delight in learning. Not only do people have a natural drive to understand, it is also something which they find pleasant. The ability of humans to discover causes and to reason about universals ensures that a student will be able to reason about his experience as his natural rational ability develops. The young person will want to know why a certain action is required in a given circumstance and will be receptive to the educator's explanations about what actions are required. He will draw together the educator's explanations and similar experiences of his own to form an inductive base for reasoning about particular actions. He will also learn general lessons from his experiences since he will be able to comprehend general truths about action. This will eventually allow him to form a conception of the best life which will, in turn, influence his reasoning about which actions to perform in a given situation. The educator may thus be assured that his pupil can assimilate the lessons he is receiving and that as moral education proceeds the student will instinctively assume responsibility for his own actions and character. The student's rational nature ensures that he will be attentive to the lessons of his teacher and that he will be able to make sense of them.

### 4.3.2 Pleasure

In addition to the desire to know which is characteristic of all people, the desires for pleasure and to avoid pain are among the most powerful resources available to the moral educator. Aristotle draws a bipartite of the soul in order to show the important place of emotion in moral excellence. Aristotle's intent was to show the importance of the combination of thought and desire in action and not on the different types of desire. As mentioned earlier, this desire initially manifests itself with respect to physical pleasures and pains and is attributed to the *epithumetic* part of the soul. However, the desire for pleasure is not necessarily limited to physical pleasures and pains. There are two ways in which young people's attitudes toward pleasure affect the actions they perform. The first is the things they find pleasant and painful: things which are physically pleasant or painful. The second is the fact that initially, at least, the desire for pleasure outweighs others in determining actions. If not properly directed, both of these influences can exert a negative effect on moral development. Thus, the moral educator must take steps to ensure that youths come to take pleasure from the right sources and that their actions are not too much directed by the desire for physical pleasure. In the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle in his view argues that pleasure is not in itself problematic, but being guided by feelings rather than arguments is.

Most people who pursue pleasure are also guided by feelings and so their seeking pleasure is bad, but only because of its association with feelings. For those who know what is fine and truly pleasant, pleasure is not problematic because these people will remain open to argument. Fortunately, pleasure has certain characteristics which help the moral educator direct his student's attitude toward it in the right direction. These characteristics also allow the educator to make use of the intrinsic desire for pleasure as a way of guiding the process of moral development as a whole. In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle explains that pleasure completes an activity. He adds later that pleasure completes activity by supervening on it as a bloom.<sup>17</sup> Although this has often been interpreted as indicating that pleasure is something additional to the activity, it does not have to be interpreted in this way. In my opinion, Aristotle most likely means that pleasure is not identical to the activity, but is some additional feature of it when it is performed well. It is thus conceptually, but not literally, distinct from the activity which it completes. Although it is possible to talk about the pleasure of doing a derivation in logic in isolation from the action, this pleasure does not exist apart from the activity.

On either interpretation, Aristotle believes that since pleasure completes activity, the quality of a pleasure is determined by its source, "...for things different in kind are, we think, completed by different things ... and, similarly, we think that activities differing in kind are completed by things differing in kind"<sup>18</sup> He notes that just as activities differ in respect to goodness and badness so too do the pleasures corresponding to them. For each thing there is a pleasure proper to it which corresponds to its characteristic activity. Thus, pleasures are differentiated by the activities they complete. For humans, the standard by which pleasures are judged is the same as that by which actions are judged. The pleasures of the good man will differ in kind from those of the bad man and are properly considered pleasures. The words Aristotle uses to express how pleasures are differentiated and indicate a difference in the objective goodness, not the subjective quality, of pleasures. Although Aristotle is emphasizing the objective differences between different kinds of pleasures in this passage, there are also allusions to the subjective feeling associated with pleasure which some commentators like Julia Annas disregard. Because of the types of activity Aristotle describes as causing pleasure, pleasures are not just bodily sensations; they include something like psychic recognition. His references to the agent's experience of the act as pleasant confirm that this subjective experience must be an element in his view of pleasure. In fact, remarks in Chapter Five of Book Ten suggest a connection between the desirability of a pleasure (which must be a function of the feeling we get from it or its quality) and its goodness. Here Aristotle argues that each thing desires most those pleasures that are associated with its characteristic activity, or goodness. Thus, he states that, "...horse, dog and man have different pleasures, as Heraclitus says, 'asses would prefer sweepings to gold'; for food is pleasanter than gold to asses"<sup>19</sup> These comments suggest that Aristotle held that the objective status of a pleasure, measured by the type of activity with which it is associated, would be reflected in the subjective experience of the agent. The reference to asses' preference here indicates that Aristotle believed that pleasure proper to a species would be the best pleasure not only with respect to goodness, but also with respect to the subjectively felt quality of pleasure derived from it. Aristotle's use of 'selection' indicates some kind of intentional selection; for an animal this selection must be based on its subjective pleasure and not some conception of its good since asses act on the basis of the feeling of pleasure and not on any conception of what is good for them.

Aristotle's use of choice to illustrate what is pleasant indicates that for humans, the subjective quality of pleasure is also relevant to choice. This fact has clear



implications for humans: the best pleasure will be that which results from excellent activity. This means that excellent activity is naturally pleasant, as determined by an objective standard (the good man) and that the feeling of pleasure a student derives from excellent activity will be greater than that which is derived from other sorts of activity. Clearly, this will make the moral educator's task much easier - he will be working with his student's desire for pleasure rather than against it because the student will naturally derive the greatest pleasure from excellent actions. Another characteristic of pleasure enables the moral educator to help his student perform the best actions. According to Aristotle, pleasure increases activity. He means by this that when a person takes pleasure in an activity he is better able to perform it. Something about his pleasure enhances his performance. He states that, "...an activity is intensified by its proper pleasure, since each class of things is better judged of and brought to precision by those who engage in the activity with pleasure ..." <sup>20</sup> Unfortunately, Aristotle does not explain exactly how pleasure increases activity. The comments which follow his statement suggest that the heightened attention of which an agent is capable because of his pleasure helps his performance. When someone finds e.g., painting enjoyable he is able to bring a certain attentiveness to it which helps him to listen to instruction, to notice details of the painting, and so forth. This will, in turn, help to improve his painting. Thus, as he comes to take pleasure in an activity, he is better able to do it. As the student naturally comes to take pleasure in excellent action, he will be all the more capable of performing excellent actions in the future.

The moral educator will use the desire to attain pleasure and to avoid pain to guide the process of development, as Aristotle indicates in *Nicomachean Ethics* Book Ten: "...in educating the young we steer them by the rudders of pleasure and pain; it is thought, too, that to enjoy the things we ought and to hate the things we ought has the greatest bearing on excellence of character" <sup>21</sup> Contrary to Sherman's claim, pain is also an element in training children. In *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle also notes that punishment will serve as a kind of cure. The moral educator uses the student's anticipation of pleasure or pain to get him to perform or refrain from an act. In the case of young students, pleasure and pain usually take the form of physical consequences and are particularly effective because this type of desire is what primarily guides them. Thus, although this aspect of training is not much discussed by him, Aristotle does acknowledge a role for corporal punishment in training children. This role, however, is

apparently a limited one and (along with the use of physical pleasure as an incentive) should fade into the background as the child's ability to reason develops.

### 4.3.3 Honour and Shame

The second natural desire Aristotle employs in his program of moral education is really two closely related emotions and desires: shame and honour. Each of these is associated with *thumetic* desires of the non-rational part of the soul. Certain characteristics are traditionally associated with *thumetic* desires (pleasure related). Plato associates *thumos* with spiritedness, the desire for honour, competitiveness, and anger. Whereas, in Aristotelian texts, *thumetic* desires share these characteristics and in addition to these attributes, individuals seem to have an internal drive for self-improvement which is attributable to the *thumos* and which will be relevant to moral education. Also, Aristotle discusses whether self-love is a good thing and indicates that the good sense of self-love moves one to strive towards the noble and to do noble deeds. Jennifer Whiting argues that the morally excellent person exhibits a sort of metaphorical competitiveness. She posits that a morally excellent person does not engage in any competitiveness because the good person is not competing against others. So, while non-excellent people compete for goods, the excellent person competes with himself. The source of the drive for self-improvement is *thumetic* desires<sup>22</sup> Thus the moral educator will be working with students who have a natural drive to improve. In addition to their competitive aspect, *thumetic* desires seem to be essentially social and concerned with an individual's perception of himself. Cairns remarks on the connection between honour and shame in Greek society, noting that each is essentially bound up with evaluations by others."<sup>23</sup>

These common threads run through each of the emotions identified in this section- each in its own way is the result of the overarching desire to think well of oneself and to believe that others respect one. There are two features of these desires which are relevant to moral development. The first is the impulse toward self-improvement and competitiveness, describes the desire at a general level. This impulse persists even in the morally excellent person. The second is the concern with other people's opinions is one way this desire is manifested. As the student matures, he accepts community standards of behaviour and becomes motivated by the *kalon*. As he does so, honour and shame will become less relevant in accounting for his action, but the generic desire for self-improvement persists in the morally excellent person, as does the desire for the pleasant. Of the variety of ways *thumetic* desires are manifested, shame and the

desire for honour are of such a nature as to be employed by the moral educator. Initially, the competitive aspect of *thumetic* desire is satisfied by comparison with others. Honour and shame reflect this concern with other people's perception of oneself and serve as a source of motivation for action. As we mentioned earlier, the *thumetic* desire for honour initially emerges from the desire for recognition of status within the community. Because their goal in seeking honour is to obtain confirmation of their social status, people tend to seek honour from those they respect or who are prominent in the community. As in other areas where people seek confirmation of their views from those whom they believe to have expertise, so in confirming their judgments about themselves and their moral stature people turn to those individuals who they believe are themselves good. Moreover, individuals want honour from those who are in a position to make an informed evaluation of them: those who know them well.<sup>24</sup> The inclination to admire parents and friends, which will be discussed below and the closeness people share with them makes *philoï* important sources for honour. Because parents and friends know them well and they hold these people in esteem, individuals are likely to seek honour from them most of all, particularly in the early stages of moral development. Others from whom people may be inclined to seek honour might be teachers, family friends and respected members of society. Aristotle remarks on the social nature of this desire in the *Rhetoric*, explaining that "[t]hey [young people] are shy, accepting the rules of society in which they have been trained, and not yet believing in any other standard of honour".<sup>25</sup> At the outset, the student will adopt society's standards and seek honour for the things it values - this is one reason why it is extremely important to be born into a good society.

Of course, those whom a person believes to be good and thus to be good judges of whether he is good may not in fact be good. Especially early on in moral training a student may seek honour from the wrong people. As moral education progresses, the opinion of the student as to who serves as a good judge may change and he may seek honour not from rich and powerful individuals but from temperate and courageous person. This shift reflects a change in the student's assessment of what is valuable. As is suggested in the passage from the *Rhetoric* cited above, as he learns more about moral excellence, his desire to be honoured will be refined - in terms of what he seeks honour for, from whom he seeks it and ultimately his attitude towards honour itself. Morally excellent people act with an eye to excellence and expect others to respect them on this basis. They will be little concerned with doing what will win popular honour, but will instead act for the sake of the *kalon*. Others who are like-minded will respect and admire

them for this. As we will see, following the initial discussion of shame, the desire to be honoured and the choice of those from whom we seek it can play an important part in moral education. Although Aristotle does not list them as opposites, in many respects the desire to avoid shame serves as the converse of the desire to be honoured. Both are driven by an agent's concern with other people's conceptions of him. Whereas honour is the desire to be thought well of, while shame is the desire not to be thought badly of. Aristotle asserts that shame is not an excellence although it is concerned with feelings and represents a mean. Nevertheless, he believes it to be a natural feeling which can help steer moral development and it will thus contribute significantly to the student's moral education.

Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, defines shame as fear of disrepute. The notion contained in this definition is also found in the definitions he gave in the *Eudemian Ethics* and in the *Rhetoric*, where it is said to be concerned with good men's opinion and pain or disturbance with regard to bad things respectively. Shame has both prospective and retrospective aspects: it may deter an agent from performing a base act and it may also reflect his regret when he acts wrongly. In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle explicitly states that shame is fear of disgrace and not of the consequences of the act.<sup>26</sup> In one way shame is an anticipatory feeling which reflects an individual's concern with what others think of him and his desire not to be thought poorly of, as against the operative aspect of the desire for honour, which is the desire to be thought well of. Like the desire for honour, shame also results from the genuine desire to do well. However, people are also apt to feel shame when they have a sense that they have done something wrong; this is its retrospective sense.

In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle indicates that people also feel ashamed when they lack some honour which their peers possess. This feeling will make individuals strive to attain honour and thereby affect behaviour. Although young people live by passion and do not yet possess good characters, they are restrained by shame; this must be the anticipation of shame because the act is in the future. The occurrent feeling of shame is a sort of second-order assessment of actions: it is an emotion that agents feel when they evaluate their own actions as being wrong according to some external standard (either actually or potentially). For this reason, the disposition to feel shame seems to presuppose a fair amount of moral development. First, the agent must have developed the desire to do good acts and to be thought well of, as well as some ability to differentiate good acts from bad. The person must have internalized society's standards about action that is

worthy of praise and blame. Thus, Aristotle argues in *Nicomachean Ethics* that only certain individuals are moved by shame: those who are generous-minded, gently born and true lovers of what is noble." If those who feel shame can be characterized as "true lovers of what is noble,"<sup>27</sup> they must have already undergone a substantial amount of habituation since being a true lover of the noble implies commitment to performing excellent acts. In addition, in order to feel shame properly, an individual must to some extent be able to discern what is the excellent response in a given circumstance. In a sense, shame is an emotion by which the partially developed intellectual ability to judge reprimands or prompts the less fully developed character. It represents the emergence of self-evaluation within a person, although this occurs primarily after the fact with respect to an external standard and is not the primary way in which shame motivates. That is, it is not primarily because a student anticipates letting himself down that shame acts as a deterrent, but because he anticipates how his actions will affect other people's opinion of him that shame can affect his actions. Although the motivation or evaluation is external, the student will have begun to internalize communal standards.<sup>28</sup>

Young people are not expected to have completely internalized society's standards; shame can help to reinforce the lessons they have learned and to deter them from acting wrongly. In its retrospective function, the feeling of shame also demonstrates that although they have followed their passions young people know what the best action is and have some desire to perform it. However, this emotion is not to be praised in adults because they should have internalized standards of behaviour and should not be led or tempted by passion; in this case, shame serves as an indication of a character flaw (either *enkrateia* or *akrasia*). According to Aristotle, then, the feeling of shame is a semi-virtue<sup>29</sup> because it is an appropriate response once one has acted wrongly and indicates that the individual can determine the right action. It is not an excellence because one should not be performing the wrong acts in the first place and should not require constraints on future actions. As a student makes moral progress, he will frequently feel less shame and he will continually resist the temptation to perform wrong acts. Shame therefore becomes less of a constraint on action.

There is another way in which shame may be regarded as representing moral progress, one which is implicit in Aristotle's definition of shame. Insofar as shame is a feeling concerned with what others think of one, it is typical of a person who is not yet morally excellent. Yet, as mentioned above, it requires some degree of self-evaluation. Since morally excellent people and those approaching moral excellence act on the basis

of excellence and not convention, they will evaluate action on these grounds and will engage in critical self-examination and self-reflection. To the degree that a young person feels or anticipates shame upon performing some bad act, he demonstrates the ability for this kind of critical self-examination, although he is still motivated by external considerations and evaluation (his reputation). As students make moral progress, there will be a transition from looking to external evaluation to relying on self-evaluation of their acts to determine their moral standing and progress. In addition to serving as an indication of a person's ability to judge acts and desire to act well, then, shame can be regarded as a semi-virtue because it represents a first step toward self-evaluation.

As in the case of honour, those who are not yet morally excellent are especially concerned with what those closest to them and those they admire think of them. They are therefore particularly reluctant to disgrace themselves in the presence of these people. Aristotle takes up this aspect of shame in his discussion of *aidos* in the *Rhetoric*. He says there that,

...since shame is the imagination of disgrace, in which we shrink from the disgrace itself and not from its consequences, and we only care what opinion is held of us because of the people who form that opinion, it follows that the people before whom we feel shame are those whose opinion of us matters to us<sup>30</sup>

These will be a group similar to that described in the discussion of honour above: those students admire those whose opinion they respect, but Aristotle adds three other groups here -those who admire them, those by whom they wish to be admired, and those with whom they are in competition. It is important to point out from the discussion above that Aristotle emphasizes the social nature of the feeling when he states that we feel no shame with those whose opinions we do not respect. Clearly, this feeling depends on those who know of our actions and not solely on self-evaluation (although as discussed above it requires the ability to judge our own actions). In concrete terms, this is likely to be students' families, teachers, peers, and those whom students consider to be morally good. This gives these different groups a privileged place in assessing their acts and helping them to assess them for themselves. This assessment will, in turn, shape future acts.

The emotion of shame and the desire to be honoured, since they are closely tied together and are both essentially concerned with other people's opinions, influence behaviour and judgment in similar ways. Both of these desires emerge from the agent's general desire for self-improvement and are manifested in the desire for other people to

have a good opinion of him; he takes this perception as an indication of his moral stature. The desire for respect from peers motivates the agent to act in accordance with expectations of him. The external assessment required by these desires has a direct effect on which acts the agent performs: he is apt to act in ways which he thinks are likely to make others honour him and not to act in ways which will bring him shame. As we will see below, the acts which are motivated in this way constitute part of the habituation of character. Aristotle remarks in the *Rhetoric* that "...there are many things that shame before such people [those we admire, those who admire us, rivals, etc.] makes us do or leave undone"<sup>31</sup> In the good social setting which Aristotle assumes, a student will begin to perform increasingly "correct" actions, where these actions are determined by the anticipated reaction of those around him."<sup>32</sup>

The competitive, *thumetic* desires to obtain honour and avoid disgrace cause people to modify their behaviour in light of the reactions of those whom they consider to be good judges of it. These desires will also make agents receptive to guidance from these same sources as they attempt to learn for themselves what constitutes honourable and shameful behaviour and to act accordingly. The moral educator can use these desires to influence behaviour and guide moral development via the attribution of praise and blame, as we will see below. Once moral education is complete, the competitive desire remains and manifests itself in the agent's on-going desire for self-improvement (as with morally excellent friends increasing each other's excellence).

#### **4.4 Filial Relations and Imitation**

Each of the factors previously discussed is a fact about human nature and its desires. The final factor is not a desire, but a group of relationships which naturally affect behaviour. In the ethical treatises, Aristotle identifies *philo* as having particular influence on the behaviour and development of individuals. *Filial* relationships initially exist between a child and his family and later include friends as well. Aristotle indicates that family and friends play an important part in the habituation process, but does not elaborate on exactly how they influence habituation. The role of the family is a topic which has received little attention from scholars over the years. Sherman emphasizes the importance of family in moral education in a popular book, *Fabric of Character*, but few others explore its influence on moral education. Much of the work Sherman does is with respect to elucidating the specific contributions family makes to moral education, but

beyond noting the role of love, she does not examine in detail how *philoï* gains influence, which is my present concern.

Although there are several ways in which relationships with family and friends contribute to habituation, there is one which I think is most characteristic of the *philiã* relationship: because of their affection for friends and family, people are inclined to admire and thus to imitate them. Habituation can thus be guided by the behaviour exhibited by family and friends and, later, by the way they articulate reasons for their behaviour.

Given Aristotle's claim that imitation is natural to children and is one of the first ways in which they learn. The fact that a child imitates members of his families (and later his friends) seems to be in some way coincidental – they would imitate anyone, not just family members. In fact, Aristotle makes this very point in the *Politics*, when he warns educators about the way children will absorb and imitate all of the things around them - the source does not seem to be significant to the child.<sup>33</sup> However, the degree of imitation is more pronounced in *philiã* relationships because of the nature of the *philiã* relationship. Family members will be doubly influential: they have early, unlimited access to children and they have a relationship with children whereby children trust and admire them, which is not true of the relationship with slaves. Because of these two factors, children will be more likely to follow their behaviour than a slave's. Aristotle remarks several times that there is a natural affection or bond between parents and children.<sup>34</sup> In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle states that, "...as in cities laws and character have force, so in households do the injunctions and habits of the father, and these have even more because of the tie of blood and the benefits he confers; for the children start with a natural affection and disposition to obey"<sup>35</sup> The natural affection children feel for their parents has an efficacy independent of the disposition to obey. In this passage, Aristotle indicates that parents' habits and injunctions both have force in moral education (as do character and laws in a city), and he says that this is so because children have both a natural affection (for their parents) and the disposition to obey. It appears that there are two parallel influences on behaviour: laws and injunctions, which work because of the disposition to obey and character and habits, which work because of affection. Since they regard their parents as good and superior, it is quite natural for children to imitate their behaviour. In fact, in the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle as translated by John Cooper describes an emotion which children feel toward their parents (and which friends may also feel toward their friends), as "feeling eagerness to match the accomplishments of others."<sup>36</sup>



Aristotle identifies this as a good emotion which makes a person take steps to acquire these goods himself. He explicitly lists excellence as an object which inspires this emotion and those individuals admired as people toward whom it is felt:

Further, since all good things that are highly honoured are objects of emulation, excellence in its various forms must be such an object .... Also [it may be felt toward] those whom many people wish to be like; those who have many acquaintances or friends; those whom many admire, or whom we ourselves admire ....<sup>37</sup>

Given that children view their parents as superior to them, it is likely that they also admire their parents and desire the goods they perceive their parents as possessing. It does not seem that in all cases children will admire those whom they view as superior to them. In some cases it strikes me as equally likely that children might resent someone who is superior to them as with someone superior in, e.g., power. Their attitude toward those superior to them will be determined largely by how those people act toward them. So if someone superior to a child in power wields her power over him in a capricious wicked manner, he is quite likely to resent rather than admire her. Although it is possible that he will come to regard power as an important possession and may take steps to acquire it, he will not do so out of admiration for the person who is more powerful. What makes me confident that Aristotle believes that children are likely to admire their parents is the characteristics with respect to which they believe them to be superior (knowledge, excellence, etc.) and the environment of the household: parents' affection toward their children and were the ones who ensured that their children were cared for.

Given that a child recognizes these characteristics as goods and that good parents are not likely to exercise them on the child in a negative way, they are more likely to inspire children to admire than to resent those who exceed them with respect to these attributes (their parents). A similar situation holds with friends.

Parents exert influence over children's behaviour in another way in addition to the desire to attain the goods their parents possess. This second means of influence is mentioned in the passage from *Nicomachean Ethics* cited above: the power parents have over children and children's obedience to them. Family life in fourth century Athens was one in which children were expected to manifest respect, loyalty and obedience, especially toward their fathers. These expectations were enforced through physical punishment.<sup>38</sup> We should therefore expect that Aristotle assumed that accepted standards of behaviour and the threat of punishment would influence a child's behaviour.

If the child wished to meet his parents' expectations and to follow their injunctions, he would be obedient and respectful of the power they had over him. Although punishment does not play a major role in Aristotle's account, we should be aware of it insofar as it must be presupposed as part of the context within which development occurs. The positive motivation from affection is more heavily emphasized by Aristotle and more in keeping with his optimistic picture of human nature and *phialial* relations, but the motivation arising from the power dynamic will also exert influence on the child's behaviour. Since the standards set by their parents and the qualities children admire in them are both ways of being and not tangible things, the most efficacious way for children to work to obtain them is through modifying their behaviour and patterning it on their parents' behaviour - in short, children will imitate or emulate the behaviour of their parents. This is why in *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle says that the habits of parents have force in the moral education of their children: because children admire their parents, they will emulate their behaviour in an attempt to acquire the goods they believe their parents possess. Moreover, in so far as children admire certain characteristics in their friends which they do not possess, they will be inclined to emulate them as well.

Aristotle's account of the parent-child relationship suggests that as children get older, they will be receptive to their parents' explanations and instructions concerning moral matters. People are likely to turn to those they believe to be more knowledgeable than themselves for help in understanding the world around them. In the case of children, this means that they are likely to look to their parents for such guidance. As children seek to learn what it is about a situation which makes it right to repay a debt or to come to someone's aid, parents will enjoy a privileged place in shaping their moral perception and judgment.

## **4.5 Aristotle's Stages of Moral Education**

### **4.5.1 Pre-Education**

Aristotle posits that the early periods in moral education are concerned primarily with training the non-rational part of the soul through proper habituation<sup>39</sup>. At this particular period of pre-education, the child's rationality is least developed. Here, there will be little or no formal instruction. Rather, the basic responsibility of the moral educator (probably the parents at this point) will be to supervise the child and to regulate those things such as music, stories and people that the children exposed to. One important goal of this phase of education is to ensure that growth and development can proceed unhindered. For this reason, Aristotle enjoins

that a child of this age should not be forced to study or to perform any kind of labour. Rather he should be kept active through amusement. Aristotle warns that the play the children will be exposed to must neither be vulgar, tiring nor effeminate.<sup>40</sup> Again, the child should be physically active. During this period, the moral educator should not attempt to instruct the child. This does not however mean that the educator (or parent) will be inactive in this phase of development. Aristotle highlights a number of ways in which a child's development may be influenced and the educator (parent) should ensure that the child is influenced in a positive way. Given children's natural tendency to imitate and their corresponding inability to discriminate good from bad, children will be particularly susceptible to forming bad habits at this age. Hence, the onus is on educators to be vigilant in keeping them away from bad examples.<sup>41</sup>

According to Aristotle, any exposure to these examples can lead to acquiring the negative traits like meanness and intemperance. One way by which the moral educator can influence a child's development at this age is the natural desire to attain pleasure and to avoid pain. Although a child's earliest inclination is toward physical pleasure and the moral educator's task will be in large part one of bringing the child to take pleasure from the proper sources, he may also capitalize on the child's enjoyment of certain activities to impart ethical lessons. The educator may occupy the child by various amusements, including stories and games. We know from Aristotle's treatment of pleasure that pleasure increases activity. For this reason, Aristotle warns educators to be careful about the kinds of speech and stories their children/pupils may hear?<sup>42</sup> He suggests that they should hear about those things which they will later pursue in earnest since the pleasure they take in them will begin to accustom them to these activities.

The same inclinations which require such vigilance from parents may also be used as a positive force in a child's pre-education. Because children naturally imitate those around them, particularly their parents, they will naturally begin to attempt to perform the same kinds of acts those around them do. Their tendency to obey the instructions of their parents also gives parents control over their children's actions. By providing good examples, parents may encourage good activity in their children. In any society laws will act as a constraint on an adult's behaviour; therefore a certain minimum standard of behaviour and examples will be achieved (at least among those who abide by the laws). The child's repeated activities, which mimic those of his parents, will be the seeds of habits. Parents should thus think about what kinds of activities and influences the child is exposed to and ensure that he is exposed to various examples of good behaviour. In addition to the explicit behavioural example the parent

sets for the child, he or she also implicitly promotes certain positive values and types of judgments. A child's effort to emulate his parent's actions more perfectly will likely lead him to seek explanations and justifications for why a given act is performed in a certain set of circumstances. This desire, combined with a child's natural desire to understand makes him particularly receptive to explanations. Thus, a parent is able to begin to teach a child about what is relevant in determining actions, what kinds of exceptions there are, what emotions it is appropriate to feel and so forth. As Sherman puts it, "the parent helps the child compose the scene in the right way."<sup>43</sup>

The parent can help to shape the cognitive basis for emotions by way of the explanations he or she offers. If a parent explains that it is not right to be angry when another child has a turn playing a game, his or her child will begin to learn that anger is appropriate only when one has been intentionally slighted and that giving another a turn is not such an occasion. Although the child will understand these lessons at a very rudimentary level, he will absorb the important fact that emotions are not always right and that their correctness depends on circumstances. The informal education of early childhood begins to orient the child in such a way that he will be receptive to more formal education later. The child begins to form attachments to good action because of the influence of pleasure in his play and because of his imitation of the good acts of the adults around him. The repetition of these acts helps him become accustomed to acting well and the pleasure associated with them (both from amusement and consequent on the act) helps him begin to take pleasure from the proper sources. The parent or educator concentrates on making sure the child does not develop bad habits and building the foundation for good ones. Even at this early stage, the child's affective response is being oriented toward the standard set by reason.

#### **4.5.2 Early Education**

The examination of human excellence as mentioned above showed that there are two things which an individual has to get correct in order to act virtuously: actions and emotions. This requires excellence in both character and reasoning. Therefore, the moral educator is concerned with ensuring that his student is habituated so as to perform correct actions and to feel proper emotions. Since Aristotle views education as a developmental process, the changes in the first stage of formal education (early education) will build upon those achieved in the period of pre-education. Thus, if the child has begun to be habituated to feel the right emotions and to perform the right actions in the pre-education phase, this process continues in early education. The influences enumerated in that earlier period will continue to

have impact during this one and others will be added. During this period, the habituation of the non-rational part of the soul is the educator's primary goal, although intellectual development takes place as well<sup>44</sup>. During early education, the instructor influences the child's actions and emotions by explicitly guiding his actions and through gymnastics and music. As we will see, these influences play two important roles in moral education: they help to properly habituate the non-rational part of the child and help the child to learn about what virtuous activity consists in.

In addition to habituation of the non-rational part of the soul, which will be discussed in a moment, the body is also trained during this phase of moral education. In *Politics*, Aristotle asserts that the body must be trained before the mind and that children should begin physical training at this age. According to the list of subject areas in *Politics*, this physical training falls under the auspices of gymnastics, which is said to promote courage. Aristotle however warns that physical training should not be excessive as it might impair the growth of the body. This type of training should be for the sake of the noble and not for its own sake: physical training is of instrumental value.<sup>45</sup> Gymnastic training is intended to give individuals the strength and confidence to exhibit bravery when necessary. Whereas, Aristotle avers that physical training he proposes is different from the Spartans which leaves students ill-equipped for developing excellence because there is more to even bravery than just physical strength and courage.

According to Aristotle, moral development requires certain discriminatory powers which are not attained through physical training. Aristotle has a fairly negative view of the importance placed on physical training by other societies and maintains that it should be limited and not excessive. Though he acknowledges its important part of a child's education - it helps him to develop the fortitude required by bravery - but much more is required in order for the child to become habituated to acting bravely (or according to any other excellence). One important element in this phase of education is not mentioned by Aristotle in the *Politics*. In *Eudemian Ethics*, Aristotle makes this most explicit where he says, "...character, being as its name indicates something that grows by habit - and that which is under guidance other than innate is trained to a habit by frequent movement of a particular kind ..."<sup>46</sup> This guidance will be provided by the moral educator. One of the ways the instructor's guidance teaches the child is through the actions it makes the child performs. This influence takes the form of repetition of acts. The Socratic craft analogy likens the exercise of excellence to a craft. Aristotle extends this analogy to cover training as well. He says in *Nicomachean Ethics* that:

... excellences we get by first exercising them, as also happens in the case of the arts as well. For the things we have to learn before we can do, we learn by doing, e.g. men become builders by building and lyre players by playing the lyre; so too we become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts<sup>47</sup>

Aristotle claims here that people acquire the excellences in a similar way to that in which they acquire various skills (*technai*) - by doing them over and over again. There is a clear sense in which individuals do not perform excellent actions over and over again since initially their acts do not meet the requirements of excellence listed in *Nicomachean Ethics* II.4 (that they choose them for their own sakes, that they have a stable *hexis* (*character*)). Therefore Aristotle must be referring in this passage to something more like action types. This would be a set of actions similar to those the morally excellent person would perform, like exercising moderation in eating. These fit the general description of the morally excellent act, but not the specific requirements listed in Book Two of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. This provides a degree of latitude in directing habituation – there may be many things beyond mechanical repetition included in it. Repetition of actions of the same type is supposed to lead to excellence in performing them. The praise and blame offered by the educator will exert direct influence on those actions the student performs. As the instructor praises a student, he will be more likely to perform actions of a similar type. From this repetition the child will learn how to perform excellent action. On the face of it, this is a rather odd assertion, even in the case of skills.

Anyone who has tried to learn to hit a golf ball or to throw a piece of pottery knows that things do not get any better by simply repeating the same action or action type (and making the same mistakes). Certain things must be implicit in Aristotle's notion of becoming excellent by performing excellent activities: some kind of guidance, an increasing level of competence, commitment to improvement, critical evaluation and so forth. Only when these features of the idea of becoming excellent through excellent activity are made explicit does the idea gain plausibility as an instrument of moral education.

As the passage cited from the *Eudemian Ethics* suggests, individuals are not habituated in isolation from other people. Students rely on the guidance of their instructors, who not only guide their actions, but also help them to analyse and evaluate them. The educator does not provide the student with a set of rules or a detailed description of what excellent action consists in which the student then practices. In the case of both excellence and other skills, the process is not one which is readily codifiable. What the educator does,

particularly in this early stage of moral education, is point the child toward particular actions as being correct, provide general explanations of why they are correct and offer advice about how to perform them. These explanations will frequently be difficult to verbalize - they may pick out features of the situation or of the participants or they may describe the action in a new light. Quite often (since we rarely encounter the same situation twice) they will take the form of analogies, highlighting some facet of an action as being the decisive factor in determining what to do. So, the moral educator might remind the child of a previously encountered situation and show him or her how the present situation is similar to it in such a way that the same type of action must again be performed, e.g. "Remember last week, when you helped the old woman cross the street? Well, this man isn't old, but he can't see and is therefore in danger, just as the old woman was. So, you should also help this man cross the street." By providing this kind of instruction, the moral educator is able to help the child to learn by doing. Thus, one way in which agents become excellent by doing excellent acts is by acquiring a certain amount of experience and know-how (*technai*). As they perform the same type of action repeatedly, students become more adept at it, provided they have some guidance and put some effort into it. For instance, someone who enrolls in a ceramics class, where the instructor tells him/her how to move his hands slowly down the lump of clay to centre and not to use too much water when pulling up the sides and as he practices doing these things, He should have more success in making pots.

Similarly, what Sherman calls "critical practice will increase the expertise of the student of ethics in determining what actions to perform."<sup>48</sup> There is a way in which this process requires, and causes, cognitive development, which furthers the child's moral development by enabling him to determine more accurately which actions to perform. The student's natural inclination to generalize from experience will ensure that as he repeats similar actions, he will learn from his experience and become more capable of judging which action to perform in similar circumstances. He will begin to recognize for himself the relevant features of a situation. Since Aristotle says that excellence comes about through habit, which is formed by repetition of actions, this repetition must not only enable a person to judge correctly which acts are required, it must also account for how he comes to perform them reliably. That is, it must account for the development and refinement of the affective part of the soul (a person's emotions and desires). This is accomplished in a variety of ways throughout the entire educational process. One way in which habituation affects a person's desires has already been mentioned: as actions, like helping those in need cross the street, become habitual, they yield a certain amount of pleasure.<sup>49</sup> Since humans naturally seek pleasure, this serves as a *prima facie*

reason to continue to perform those actions. The response of the educator also helps to shape the affections. Insofar as the student abstracts generalizations from the moral educator's responses, these generalizations influence the cognitive component of emotions. The circumstances which are considered to be the proper basis of various emotions are shaped by generalizations founded on the moral educator's response. As the student learns more about the proper emotional response, his emotions are refined and become more appropriate to the situation.

Another part of the educational program that shapes the affective part of the soul is education in music which commences during this first phase of formal education. Aristotle's discussion of music in this phase of education focuses on music and does not mention the poetic stories which play a prominent role in Plato's account. This could be explained by the incompleteness of *Politics*, which ends with the treatment of music - Aristotle might have continued with the discussion of other forms of music in the remainder of the treatise. It is instructive to note that along with musical training, explicit instruction will continue in later phases of education. There are numerous clues in the text of *Politics* which indicate that Aristotle believed musical education to begin in the first phase of formal education. The most telling is a comment he makes, where he says,

Besides, children should have something to do, and the rattle of Archytas, which people give to their children in order to amuse them and prevent them from breaking anything in the house, was a capital invention, for a young thing cannot be quiet. The rattle is a toy suited to the infant mind, and education is a rattle or toy for children of a larger growth. We conclude then that they should be taught music ...<sup>50</sup>

The reference to children in this passage, as well as the reference to education as a rattle or toy suggest that Aristotle thought musical education would begin when rattles and toys were no longer appropriate, probably at some point in the first phase of education. At this time, the student is still young enough (between seven and fourteen) to be accurately referred to as a child, but seems to be ready for musical education. Thus, Lord Carnes seems to be incorrect in placing musical training in the second phase of the educational program. Musical training has a notable effect on the development of character. Aristotle says repeatedly that it has a strong influence on character and that the practice of music can promote the development of the affective part of the soul. At this age, in particular, music influences a person. Because children are still motivated primarily by pleasure, music is an especially effective tool at this point in the educational program: "[t]he study is suited to the



stage of youth, for young persons will not, if they can help, endure anything which is not sweetened by pleasure, and music has a natural sweetness"<sup>51</sup> According to this passage, music is particularly effective because it is pleasant. It thus has the characteristics of pleasant activity discussed in the first part of this chapter: children naturally want to do it more and to become better at it. Pleasure makes them attentive to musical training and the lessons thereof.

Lord Carnes in his discussion on the *Politics*, highlights how Aristotle enumerates a number of ways in which music may affect character through its imitation of emotions and character:

And that they are so affected is proved in many ways, and not least by the power which the songs of Olympus exercise; for beyond question they inspire enthusiasm, and enthusiasm is an emotion of the character of the soul. Besides, when men hear imitations, even apart from the rhythms and tunes themselves, their feelings move in sympathy...Rhythm and melody supply imitations of anger and gentleness, and also of courage and temperance, and of all the qualities contrary to these, and of the other qualities of character, which hardly fall short of the actual affections, as we know from our own experience, for in listening to such strains our souls undergo a change.<sup>52</sup>

Through music children experience various emotions and these emotions are developed by exposure to the imitations of music and because of the effect music has on the soul, Aristotle says that only certain modes of music have a beneficial effect in the education of children. He identifies the Dorian mode as expressive of character, where this must mean good character<sup>53</sup> The Dorian mode is a mean between others and produces a moderate and settled temper. Aristotle says that this music is not as emotional and exciting as the Phrygian mode, but he does not name the other extreme in Chapter Seven - it is probably Mixolydian, which makes us sad and grave.

It is quite difficult to articulate the exact mechanism by which music changes character, but it must be somewhat as follows. Aristotle follows Plato in assuming that the student will become like what he enjoys. He clearly thinks that the ethical quality of music will bring a student to experience the emotions for himself and that the pleasure derived from the music will both reinforce these lessons and make him receptive to future lessons, thus allowing habituation to occur through repetition of similar kinds (modes) of music. In bringing the student to experience emotion, good music brings him to feel certain emotions in response to the correct triggers. In addition to making students delight in the right things, Aristotle holds that musical training aids in the development of good judgment, which also

fleets their behaviour. From the context of this comment, it appears as if what Aristotle is referring to here is the ability to judge correctly which things are truly pleasant and painful (or loving and hating correctly). This, then, is another way in which music affects the development of the affective part of the soul: it facilitates the student in forming attachments to the proper objects. A child's enjoyment of music influences his assessment of its subject matter. Thus, by portraying noble subjects music may help to cultivate an attachment to them which is expressed in correct judgments about their value.

Aristotle insists that the child should learn not only to listen to music, but also to perform (although not at a professional level). He states that children must learn to perform because in this way they will be better able to judge the work of others. The ability to perform and the work that goes into developing that ability teach students to appreciate and delight in what is fine. As with any skill, those who actually exercise it are able to appreciate the performance of others in a way that the untrained cannot, no matter how educated they are in the area. Performers know what really is difficult and what only seems difficult to observers. They can thus judge more accurately than others what is of merit in a performance. Aristotle is making the claim here that actually doing a thing teaches a student about it in a way that observation, however keen, cannot. This parallels his views on becoming excellent by doing excellent acts. In both cases, the student's development is promoted by activity. With musical training the pupil develops the ability to judge as well as his affective responses. In addition to enhancing the ability to judge the performance of others, Aristotle says that actual practice of the art makes a considerable difference in the character of the performer.<sup>54</sup> Performing makes an individual feel the music in a deeper way than the audience does because he is actually producing the imitation of character or emotion. As a child learns, he performs the same pieces repeatedly, thus experiencing the same feelings numerous times. This repetition assists in the cultivation of the sentiments and in associating them with their proper objects and thus brings the child to delight in noble things. Sherman describes the effect of musical training in the following way:

... the learner's mimetic enactment of them [the modes] (through performance) is a way of coming to feel from the inside the relevant qualities of character and emotion. It is an emulative and empathetic kind of identification. Together with the positive reinforcement that comes from pleasure music naturally gives. The mimetic enactment will constitute habituation.<sup>55</sup>

Music, then, is a valuable tool for the moral educator because of its ethical character and the pleasure associated with it. The effort and practice required to learn to perform

music impart important lessons applicable to many areas of life. The child learns to refine his actions with practice and that practice does, indeed, pay off. These lessons will be important later in the child's moral training, as he begins to reflect on his own actions and tries to act excellently. By training his pupil in music, the educator is able to refine his judgments about action, to shape the affective part of the soul and to help the student to experience the proper sentiments. In this first stage of formal moral education we see both cognitive and affective development, as we should expect given Aristotle's conceptions of moral excellence and development. The student begins to be habituated to performing correct actions and feeling correct emotions through gymnastics, directed activity and musical training. As he becomes habituated in a certain way, it becomes natural insofar as it happens with regularity and begins to yield its own pleasure.<sup>56</sup> The pleasure he takes in noble activity, in turn, strengthens his attachment to it. At this point, the child has begun to acquire the proper ends and affections through habituation, but the habituation process is by no means complete. Although the child has some attachment to fine action and experiences pleasure upon performing it, he still has strong competing desires which often control his actions: his habits are not yet well entrenched and his desires are not unified. He has not yet made the transition to self-directed action - his actions still will be externally guided. Although he may be able to identify excellent actions and what makes them excellent in some cases, he has not yet become capable of adult moral reasoning which yields *prohairesis* (practical wisdom).

### **4.5.3 Late Education**

The next stage in formal education, which lasts from fourteen to twenty-one, will build on the achievements of the previous ones. The habituation process which begun in pre and early education will continue in late education and several new instruments of education will be introduced in addition. The primary difference between adolescence and the earlier stages in the educational program is the increasing emergence of reason, self-determined action and self-assessment. In this stage of education, the educator is still primarily concerned with habituation of the non-rational part of the soul, but he is working with a more complicated, sophisticated student and therefore has more resources at his disposal. Aristotle remarks on the nature of youth in several places. In the *Rhetoric*, he devotes a chapter to describing the youthful type of character. He characterizes youth as a time when an individual experiences strong desires (*epithumiai*) and is often led by them.<sup>57</sup> These desires tend to be variable though - they arise quickly and strongly, but subside just

as quickly. Aristotle observes that youths are particularly prone to acting not only on strong desires, but also from anger (*thumos*). This is because of their desire for honour. Youths at this age have become committed to society in a way that they were not when they were younger; this suggests that social norms and expectations will have a greater influence on their actions during this period of their education than previously. Because they lack experience in life, youths are optimistic and confident and therefore tend toward excess. At this age, young men tend to live according to their characters rather than according to reason. Aristotle explains that character and excellence lead a person to choose noble actions, as opposed to reasoning, which selects what is useful. Since youths live and act according to their characters, they will tend to select those actions they believe to be noble.

The youth, Aristotle describes and with whom the moral educator will be working sounds like a typical modern day teenager. He experiences emotions deeply, cares what others think of him and acts from his feelings rather than from deliberation. Because he lacks experience, particularly of negative things, the student will be overly trusting and over-confident of his own abilities. He will not know what is realistic in a situation. Aristotle also notes that young people are particularly attached to, and influenced by, their friends. And all of these characteristics must be taken into consideration by the moral educator, who should tailor this stage of the education program to accommodate the characteristics of youth. As mentioned above, many of the methods of instruction used in earlier periods continue to be used in late education. Presumably, the instructor will continue to offer explicit guidance to the youth with respect to the activities he performs, although this will take a broader range of forms than during the first phase of education. In this regard, musical training remains one of the training that will continue beyond early education into late education. According to Aristotle, to come to delight in music properly will require study beyond middle childhood.<sup>58</sup> So, we can expect musical training to have the same kinds of effects during this period.

Similarly, the tendency toward imitation will continue during this period of development. However, the object of imitation is likely to be different. Rather than the child's parents, a young man of this age will be inclined to imitate his friends. At this point in his development, Aristotle explains, a young person is particularly fond of his friends and they will likely have a big influence on his behaviour. In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle says that young friends keep each other from error. The student's friends, then, play an important role in his continuing development. Depending on their character, they can either reinforce earlier lessons about what is fine or get the student off track. The moral educator

needs to oversee the young man's friends as much as possible. It is unlikely that the educator will be able to shape the interactions that constitute a friendship; he therefore needs to ensure that his charge's friends are also moving toward proper habituation. If he is able to do this, then the student's friendships have a positive effect on his development. Friends will reinforce each other's good behaviour and criticize each other when they act badly. Another area where external influences can shape a young man's development is his pursuit of honour and his effort to avoid shame. In his effort to obtain honour or to avoid shame, a young person will try to conform to social expectations. A shift in priorities has occurred as social convention becomes more influential than parental expectation in determining the young man's actions. The desires for honour and to avoid shame serve as a strong source of motivation in the young student; the moral educator should take advantage of this by orienting him toward what is truly honourable and away from what is shameful. He may do this with the application of praise and blame, as well as with explanations. This in turn brings the student to perform the best acts, which we have seen has a positive effect on his development. As he repeats these actions, he becomes habituated to them and is able to draw on them in his moral reasoning. Being oriented toward what is truly honourable (and away from what is shameful) leads the young man to properly assess actions and people.

If he incorrectly thinks wealth, rather than generosity is to be honoured, he will consider wealthy people to be more honourable and better than generous ones. However, if he correctly assesses the relative value of these two things, he will correctly judge the people who possess them. Since those he honours have influence on his actions, getting the student to honour the right people will contribute to his development. Thus, it is important for the educator to bring his student to seek honour from the right people (those who know what is truly valuable). In this way, he will be able to inspire his pupil to perform good acts (which will habituate him to good action), to become attached to the right things and to accurately assess what they are. A young man's awareness of social norms and conventions also indicates that he will probably be aware of and influenced by the laws of his society. This awareness is likely to have an influence on his actions which is caused by the desire for honour. Since according to Aristotle a young person wants to be regarded as a good member of society (insofar as he wishes to be honoured), he will do his best to live by its standards, as reflected in its *nomoi*. Laws will be a more direct constraint on adults who lack proper habituation<sup>59</sup>, as Aristotle indicates but they also direct the behaviour of someone who strives to be a good member of his community, as the young person does. For

this reason, Aristotle urges the community to use legislation in moral education. Laws should be used not only because they reflect an accurate assessment of situations and people and thereby reduce the chances of bad examples for young people, but also because they provide a minimum standard for a person's actions. By guiding his actions, laws can exert a positive influence on a young person's development and help him to act according to reason rather than passion when these conflict.

There is another component in the educational program which Aristotle does not explicitly say contributes to moral education, but which has effects on character and therefore seems to contribute to moral education. He mentions in *Poetics* that men learn through the imitation of poetry (which includes tragedy), but nowhere develops this point in any detail. Since Aristotle does not discuss tragedy in the context of education, as he does music, we are left to extrapolate his views from his discussion of the topic in the *Poetics* and from what we have learned thus far about his views on education. I include the discussion of tragedy here, in late education, because it would be particularly effective at this time (and I believe Aristotle would have recognized this). As I will discuss below, tragedy is said to affect a person largely through the emotions, especially pity and fear. Since Aristotle believes youths feel emotion strongly and are heavily influenced by it, it seems reasonable to conjecture that he would have recognized the effectiveness of tragedy as a means for affecting young students. However, appreciation of tragedy (as well as the emotions of pity and fear) also requires experience. Identification with the characters and their fate, which is how tragedy works, requires a certain amount of empathy, which in turn requires accepting that bad things can happen to one. As young people have not yet had enough experience in the world to realize how fragile happiness is and how quickly bad things can befall them. Tragedy becomes important because tragedy requires both passion and a certain degree of experience, it would seem to be effective only toward the end of this second phase of education. We may anticipate that Aristotle thought it might play a role in a young person's moral development only once he had gained a fair amount of experience and had become able to feel empathetic emotions -probably in the latter half of late childhood and into adulthood.

In the *Poetics*, Aristotle describes tragedy in very specific terms. In chapter six of the *Poetics*, he offers the following definition of tragedy:

A tragedy, then, is the imitation of an action that is serious and also, as having magnitude, complete in itself: in language with pleasurable accessories, each kind brought in separately in the parts of the work; in a dramatic, not in a narrative form; with

incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish its catharsis of such emotions.”<sup>60</sup>

As he continues his treatment of tragedy, Aristotle adds detail to this definition. He notes that the plot should be of such a length that it is possible for the audience to keep the whole thing in their memories. In chapter nine, he discusses plot and says that whatever the plot is about, it must be believable and must be about incidents which arouse pity and fear. The plot should contain three parts: reversal of fortune, discovery and suffering. Its central character must be neither too good nor too bad: he must be one of "...the intermediate kind of personage, a man not pre-eminently virtuous and just, whose misfortune, however, is brought upon him not by vice and depravity but by some fault ..."<sup>61</sup> In order to generate tragic pleasure, Aristotle says, the poet must produce pity and fear by a work of imitation; therefore, the causes of events which arouse pity and fear should be included in the story. In the *Poetics*, Aristotle explains that pity and fear are caused by certain things: "...pity is occasioned by undeserved misfortune, and fear by that of one like ourselves ..." <sup>62</sup> Although he does not provide much detail about these emotions in the *Poetics*, Aristotle discusses both of them in greater depth in the *Rhetoric* and we may learn about these emotions from the discussion there. In Aristotle's discussion, fear is portrayed as an emotion which is felt in anticipation of events which have the power to destroy a person. We feel fear because it is entirely possible that we should commit a hamartia that will issue in tragic consequences for us and/or our loved one. A person comes to fear things that he believes may legitimately happen to him which are not in the distant future. One way to incite fear in an audience, Aristotle informs the orator, is to make them believe that some danger befell people like themselves. Although this advice is intended for an orator, it seems just as applicable to a tragic poet because presumably both are dealing with audiences with similar emotional responses. We see in Aristotle's description of the tragic hero and plot an effort to make sure that the events are believable and to ensure that the audience will identify with the situation.

Pity is defined in the *Rhetoric* as "...a feeling of pain at an apparent evil, destructive or painful, which befalls one who does not deserve it, and which we might expect to befall ourselves or some friend of ours, and moreover to befall us soon"<sup>63</sup> Thus, pity is partly anticipatory and partly reactive. Like fear, it requires that an agent identify with the person who suffers. However, the requirement of identification seems to be less stringent in the case of pity. Aristotle notes that a person feels pity not only when he feels a similar thing

may happen to him, but also when he feels that it might happen to someone he cares about. Thus, a young man might feel pity in reaction to a situation he imagines might happen to his father. The experience of these emotions may also lead to a feeling of vulnerability with respect to the events of life. In these respects, in particular, the occurrent emotion of pity serves to remind an individual of the importance of his *phialial* relations - imagining or recognizing the evils that might befall those he cares about reinforces the young man's sense of connection to them and empathy for them.

The aspects of the structure of the tragedy described above are particularly suited for evoking pity and fear: a tragedy will concern characters the student can identify with and plots which strike him as both undeserved and awful. This is why the actions in the plot must be possible - so that the audience will believe the events can happen to them. The reversal and discovery also combine to make the audience feel pity and fear by helping people see that the fate that befalls the hero is undeserved. The mere fact of the play, with its actors and acting will serve to enhance whatever pity the audience is apt to feel: in his treatment of pity in the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle observes that whoever heightens their words with dramatic elements (gestures, tones, appearances and so forth) is especially successful in exciting pity. Although in the *Poetics* he expresses a preference for those tragedies which arouse emotion by their structure rather than by a spectacle, the dramatic elements will nonetheless contribute to the impact of the tragedy, as long as they are not excessive.

Tragedy contributes to moral education in two ways: as a way of learning about human action (intellectually) and as a way of developing and refining the experience of emotions (emotionally). The first is rather straightforward. Aristotle says in Chapter Four of the *Poetics* that humans learn first through imitation and naturally enjoy imitation. The events in the play promote the development of his practical reasoning. As he views these events he will gain knowledge about what constitutes a proper response to such situations. Aristotle states that imitation causes people to learn and that it thereby causes delight. Pleasure is associated with imitation as a result of its role in promoting learning and understanding. And it is also natural for all to delight in works of imitation. The truth of the second point is shown by experience: though the objects themselves may be painful to see, we delight to view the most realistic representations of them in art, the forms for example of the lowest animals and of dead bodies. The explanation is to be found in a further fact: to be learning something is the greatest of pleasures not only to the philosopher but also to the rest of mankind, however small their capacity for it; the reason of the delight in seeing the picture is that one is at the same time learning.



As argued above, an individual's enjoyment of an activity makes him more attentive to it and enhances the learning process. In the present case this occurs via poetry. This aspect of poetry is again touched on in chapter nine. Aristotle says there that "...its [poetry's] statements are of the nature ... of universals.... by a universal statement I mean one as to what such or such kind of man will probably or necessarily say or do ..." <sup>64</sup>

In this context, Aristotle uses "universal" in a non-technical way to refer to general truths and characterizations as opposed to particular individuals and event. By showing the audience these general truths, tragedy helps those who view it to learn about human nature and action. They will have a better understanding of how to respond to events which will in turn inform their reasoning about action. Tragedy (as a kind of poetry) provides examples from which the student can learn. He will encounter different types of individuals and have an opportunity to observe what they say and do. From these specific examples of universals (the characters would not be considered particulars because even though they may be fashioned after historical figures.

#### **4.5.4 Continuing Education**

As stated above, the formal program of education promotes a child's moral development in a variety of ways. At the conclusion of the formal program of moral education, the student has learned to feel emotion in more or less the right way; his emotions may be regarded as being in conformity with reason. The student has developed a rich and discerning set of emotions which helps him to respond appropriately to different situations. He/she has also begun to form an inductive base from which to reason for himself about what action to perform in a given situation.

Finally, he has begun to engage in self-reflection about his/her acts and to identify with *reason* as a standard for action. This transition toward self-assessment reflects the student's own emerging commitment to excellence. Nevertheless, the student still needs exposure to additional situations to perfect his/her moral reasoning. Acquisition of *phronesis* and harmonization of the rational and non-rational parts of the soul also require development of a view of the end which underlies his choices. Once his ability to reason is perfected and he has a settled view of the end, the student will achieve *phronesis*. He will still need to attain unity of desire in order to act consistently for the sake of the *kalon* and to achieve full moral excellence. Although Aristotle says nothing explicit about a second phase of education, there are sufficient clues to allow us to be fairly confident that he intended education to proceed roughly along the lines that will be developed. Lord and Sherman suggest that moral education is completed through the continuation of habituation

begun in the first phase of education. Although this might yield progress and practical success in some areas, it will not bring about all of the changes required for the attainment of full moral excellence. The acquisition of *phronesis* requires intellectual training and some view about the good life which is not provided by habituation and continued training. Moreover, continued habituation does not account for the unification of thought and desire and the stability of character required for full moral excellence.

Scholars like Iakovos Vasiliou and John McDowell, see the teachings in the ethical works as adding detail to the student's conception of excellent action and as helping him to determine what actions to perform. Others, like Myles Burnyeat and Richard Sorabji, view the ethical treatises as providing abstract lessons which help the student to generate and understand a conception of the end. According to them, this will promote practical reasoning in particular, but will have an impact on character as well.

#### **4.6 Neo Aristotelian and a Critique of Aristotle's Theory of Virtue**

We will now turn to a prominent Aristotelian, Alasdair MacIntyre who has reawakened interest and advanced Aristotle's virtue theory. MacIntyre dwells critically on the social narratives as a significant factor in the development of moral agent. MacIntyre avers that theory of ethics requires an acceptable conception of human good which will enable us to show how morality can be explicated in terms of character traits that are indispensable or useful for the attainment of that good. Perhaps because it is so difficult to find such a view of the good, the virtues have not occupied a central position in modern moral philosophy. Alasdair MacIntyre believes that it is both possible and important to overcome this difficulty. In *After Virtue* he offers an original and wide-ranging theory of morality as primarily a matter of virtue. He puts this forward as alternative to current theories which he sees as preoccupied with moralities of rule or principle. According to MacIntyre, morality in our time is in a state of crisis. Society is rent by controversies which are unresolvable because the positions on each side rest on premises so disparate that no rational choice among them is possible. Moral language retains its objective meaning, but, as the emotivists saw, it is actually used to forward personal or class ends. People view even their own principled commitments as contingent choices. The modern self "has no necessary social content and no necessary social identity"<sup>65</sup>

MacIntyre's account of the Virtues contains two main concepts as its foundation viz: practice and narrative unity. The concept of a practice will be considered first in

order to shape MacIntyre's account from the standpoint of this concept which lies at the cornerstone of the subject matter. It is important to mention his two caveats at the outset. He does not desire to imply that the virtues are only exercised via his notion of a practice and that this notion can be defined in a special way unlike contemporary usage of the word. His definition is as follows:

By 'practice' I am going to mean any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended.<sup>66</sup>

It is important to consider MacIntyre's notions of goods external and internal to a practice. His use of the example of chess as a practice is helpful. As an incentive to play chess, a child is first offered candy. If the child also wins while playing the chess game, additional candy will be given. So, the child plays and plays to win, for the candy. As long as the candy is the only reason the child has for playing, there is nothing to prevent his/her cheating but, rather, much to promote it. There may come a time however, when the child plays chess for its own sake; in order to achieve analytical skills, imaginative strategies, for the intensity of competition and for excelling in any way chess demands, as opposed to playing chess strictly for the purpose of winning.

The external goods attached contingently to chess-playing by social situation are candy for the child and in the case of adults, fame and fortune. Yet, there are other ways to attain such goods and their attainment is never to be had only by undertaking some particular practice. In contrast, there are goods internal to chess-playing that cannot be attained by any other way than the practice of chess or some other specific game. They are internal because they can only be identified and recognized experientially in participating in the practice at hand. External goods always belong to individuals as their possessions and the more one individual owns of these goods the fewer there are available to others. This makes external goods identified with competition in which there are winners and losers. While internal goods also may be the result of competition, their attainment is for the benefit of the entire community of individuals who are involved in the practice. The virtues relate to internal and external goods in that the exercise of the virtues enables the attainment of internal goods and the lack of exercising the virtues prevents that attainment.

The positive effect of the virtues can be seen in terms of the fact that the virtues of justice, courage, and truthfulness are necessary elements of any practice with internal goods and these virtues should be exercised in connection with others who participate in practices. Understanding this would hopefully prevent the willingness to cheat, as could have been the case for the child in the chess game. This is to say that there are certain expectations with respect to the relationships between those who participate in a practice. The subject virtues are integral to the definition of such relationships and can be seen as required ingredients for excellence in attaining goods internal to practices.

There are some other key elements with respect to understanding MacIntyre's concept of practices. A practice is always more than just a set of technical skills. A practice inherently involves conceptions of pertinent goods. These goods and ends change and are enriched over time by the practices relating to particular skills. There is however a bigger picture with respect to practices which transcends the element of technical skills. There are also standards of excellence and obedience to rules which are added to the attainment of goods. According to MacIntyre, undertaking a practice entails the acceptance of the authority of given standards that may define a practice. It means subjecting personal desires and opinions to the standards of a practice and accepting the authority of standards laid down at this point in time. Again, practices do have histories and so standards may vary over time and are not beyond criticism but neither are beyond the respect required by these standards. This historical dimension is crucial and also requires the exercising of the virtues because undertaking a practice does not just involve relationships to other practitioners but also to those who preceded us in time in the practice. For the sake of learning from the past, the virtues of justice, courage and truthfulness are also required because virtues promote the necessary disposition which is able to learn from history and respect it without discarding it.

Practices also need to be identified in relation to institutions. While chess is a practice, a chess club is an institution. Institutions are inherently concerned with external goods and are involved in gaining and distributing money and bestowing power and status as rewards. Practices cannot survive unless they are sustained by institutions. In MacIntyre's words:

Indeed so intimate is the relationship of practices to institutions - and consequently of the goods external to the goods internal to the practices in question - that institutions and practices characteristically form a single causal order in which the ideals and the creativity of the practice are always vulnerable to the

acquisitiveness of the institution, in which the cooperative care for common goods of the practice is always vulnerable to the competitiveness of the institution<sup>67</sup>

The role of the virtues is evident. Practices would be corrupted by institutions if it were not for the influence of justice, courage, and truthfulness. The 'health' of a practice, its integrity and wholeness will be proportionate to the exercising of the virtues, which has the ability to sustain the institutions which socially bear the practice. Empirically, this would be revealed by the way that without the virtues only external and not internal goods would be recognizable in the context of practices. Therefore, the virtues of justice, courage, and truthfulness will often keep us from being wealthy, famous, or powerful. It would also follow that if external goods were to be dominant in a particular society, the concept of the virtues might experience a natural disappearance.

To locate the point and function of virtues merely within the context of practices would be to limit their substantive application. There needs to be a telos which can transcend the limited goods of practices in terms of the good of a whole individual human life conceived as a unity.

...it is rationally justifiable to conceive of each human life as a unity, so that we may try to specify each such life as having its good and so that we may understand the virtues as having their function in enabling an individual to make of his or her life one kind of unity rather than another?<sup>68</sup>

According to MacIntyre, it is rationally justifiable to conceive of each human life as a unity as he describes it. The character of this unity provides the virtues with an adequate telos in such a way that the unity of that life and the virtues coexist with the virtues sustaining that unity. There are some social and philosophical challenges in the pathway to this concept. On the social side, modernity separates each human life into segments so that none of them is related to any extent. On the philosophical side, there is a proclivity to think atomistically about human actions and to think of them in terms of single components. In MacIntyre's account of the virtues, one needs to see how a life is a unity rather than a chronology of individual actions and episodes. That also means the unity of a virtue in an individual's life is intelligible only in terms of being a characteristic of a unitary life. That life should be conceived and judged as a whole. This concept of unity relates to the characteristic narrative mode of human life. This is seen in the way that human actions relate to one another in such a way that we can understand what someone is doing if we know their intentions and their relation to particular settings.

MacIntyre insists that behavior cannot be genuinely identified separate from intention, beliefs, and settings. Ultimately, we characterize human actions by way of a narrative history which gives us the information necessary to make actions intelligible.

Related to the idea of narrative with respect to the unity of a human life is the point that each narrative has a sense of unpredictability and a certain ideological character. There are conceptions of certain possible goods which inform our decisions and subsequent actions. These can be considered as ends or goals to which we strive. We enter our lives with one or more particular roles which we learn about. The present is informed by some image of the future which comes forward as a telos, an end or goal of some sort. The narrative concept of selfhood entails that we are the subject of a particular history which belongs to no one else and that our selfhood is correlative. We are part of one another's stories. The narrative of each life is part of a correlating set of narratives. We relate to one another's narratives.

It is important to consider some questions:

In what does the unity of an individual life consist? The answer is that its unity is the unity of a narrative embodied in a single life. To ask 'What is the good for me?' is to ask how best I might live out that unity and bring it to completion. To ask 'What is the good for man?' is to ask what all answers to the former question must have in common.<sup>69</sup>

The moral life has unity as we systematically ask the last two questions and strive to answer them in deed and word. The unity of a human life and the unity of a narrative quest are equal according to MacIntyre. The corresponding criteria for success or failure in a human life as a whole are the same for a narrated or to-be-narrated quest. Such a quest is identified as having a final telos as well as a conception of the good for man.

For MacIntyre, the virtues then are to be understood as dispositions which sustain practices and enable individuals to achieve the internal goods of practices. The virtues will also sustain individuals in the appropriate kind of quest for the good as they overcome harms, dangers, and temptations which they encounter. The catalogue of the virtues will include such virtues as those needed to sustain the type of household and political communities in which men and women can strive for the good together. This leads to a conclusion about the good life for man. It is the life undertaken for the sake of seeking the good life for man and the required virtues are those necessary for us to understand more about the good life for man. A third stage is that of never seeking the good or exercising the virtues for the sake of the individual because what it is to live the

good life varies from setting to setting and person to person. The good is sought with reference to the particular role we each fill. We are someone's son or daughter, citizen of this or that city. What is good for us has to be good for anyone who inhabits such roles. The past we inherit from our family, city and nation constitute the given facts of our lives and these things give our lives 'moral particularity.' We each have an historical identity and a social identity. We are each part of a history and the bearer of a tradition. Tradition in MacIntyre's usage entails established norms and practices of a community. Practices relate here because they also have histories and what a practice is subject to whatever mode has been used to transmit it through many generations. The virtues relate here as well because they sustain the relationship required for practices.

Practices also relate to traditions in terms of the fact that practices are transmitted through tradition. Traditions are usually partially constituted by an argument describing the goods, which if pursued gives to that tradition its unique point and purpose. MacIntyre says,

When an institution say, a university, or a hospital – is the bearer of a tradition of practices, its common life will be partly, but in a centrally important way, constituted by a continuous argument as to what a university is and ought to be or what good farming is or what good medicine is...A living tradition then is an historically extended, socially embodied argumentation an argumentation precisely in art about the good which constitutes that tradition.<sup>70</sup>

A tradition is the context, within which individual undertakes the pursuit of goods. This takes place sometimes through many generations. These are the goods internal to practice and the goods a single life, each life being a part of a tradition to reiterate a point made earlier, the narrative aspect of history is critical to understanding practices, tradition and lives of individuals separately and their relationship to one another. This is because the history of a practice is made intelligible by way of the extensive history of the tradition through which we learned of the present form of the particular practice. To articulate this critical relationship even further, the history of each of our own lives is generally grounded in and made intelligible by way of the histories of multiple traditions. According to MacIntyre, traditions can be sustained and strengthened or deteriorate and disappear. This can happen due to exercising or not exercising the appropriate virtues. The virtues have a complex purpose. Not only do they sustain the relationships necessary to achieve a variety of goods internal to practices and sustain the context of an individual life in which one seeks out his or her own good in terms of the

good of a whole life for him or her but also they sustain the traditions which gives practices and individual lives the historical context they need. Traditions can become corrupted by the lack of the exercising of the virtues, just as the institutions and practices which receive their life from those traditions, can be corrupted. Having a sense of the traditions to which one belongs or which confront one is a virtue because this sense allows one to see future possibilities which the past, received through traditions, has made available to individuals in the present. Therefore, living traditions link the past to the future.

MacIntyre's account of the virtues as stated above requires an understanding of social life in which traditions and practices are strengthened by the exercise of the virtues. These interconnected social relationships are intelligible within the contexts of the narrative histories in which they exist. MacIntyre regards Aristotle as the representative of a long tradition, as someone who articulates what a number of predecessors and successors have articulated with varying degrees of success. MacIntyre posits that Aristotle's thought is intelligible only when understood as a work situated in a tradition. Such tradition is a platform or what may be properly regarded as raw materials which could be modified to accommodate progress. And when such tradition is in good order at the time progress is occurring, the cumulative element to a tradition is preserved. MacIntyre points out that Aristotle's works are a conversation within the Athenian tradition whereby his engagement is to be the representative rational voice of the educated Athenian citizens. Thus a philosophical theory of the virtues is a theory whose subject-matter is that pre-philosophical theory already implicit in and presupposed by the best contemporary practice of the virtues.

Voicing Aristotle's position, MacIntyre mentions that what constitutes the good for man is a complete human life lived at its best, and the exercise of the virtues is a necessary and central part of such a life. As such, our characterisation of what is the good for man must necessarily make reference to the virtues. And the outcome of the exercise of a virtue is a choice which issues in right action. Though some individuals may have an inherited natural disposition to do on occasion what a particular virtue requires. But this happy gift of fortune is not to be confused with the possession of the corresponding virtue; for just because it is not informed by systematic training and by principle. Even those few fortunate individuals will be the prey of their own emotions and desires. That is, the possession and exercise of virtues require a great deal of training to achieve in



order to adequately understand their emotions and desires. Virtues are not just dispositions to act rightly but to have commensurate and appropriate feeling. MacIntyre argues that Virtues are dispositions not only to act in particular ways, but also to feel in particular ways. To act virtuously is not, as Kant was later to think, to act against inclination; it is to act from inclination formed by the cultivation of the virtues.<sup>71</sup>

MacIntyre further posits, in consonance with Aristotle, that an educated moral agent must of course know what he is doing when he judges or acts virtuously. As such, he does what is virtuous because it is virtuous. It is this fact that distinguishes the exercise of the virtues from the exercise of certain qualities which are not virtues, but rather simulacra of virtues. The well-trained soldier, for instance, may do what courage would have demanded in a particular situation, but not because he is courageous but because he is well-trained. The genuinely virtuous agent however acts on the basis of a true and rational judgment.

MacIntyre however quarrels with Aristotle's conclusion wherein the latter writes off non-Greeks, barbarians and slaves, as not merely failing to possess political relationships, but as incapable of them. This position is interpreted to mean that only the affluent and those of high status can achieve certain key virtues, those of munificence and of magnanimity; craftsmen and tradesmen constitute an inferior class, even if they are not slaves. Hence the peculiar excellences of the exercise of craft skill and manual labour are invisible from the standpoint of Aristotle's catalogue of the virtues. MacIntyre regards this as blindness of Aristotle. Of course, MacIntyre excused Aristotle on the basis that such view was not of course private to Aristotle; it was part of the general, although not universal, blindness of Aristotle's culture. It is intimately connected with another form of limitation. Aristotle writes as if barbarians and Greeks both had fixed natures and in so viewing them he brings home to us once again the ahistorical character of his understanding of human nature.

Related to the above is Aristotle's perceived relegation of women in his works. In Aristotle's work, he thought that women were incapable of public responsibility, and that some humans were natural slaves, or that menial work was somehow dehumanizing. Scholars have disputed vigorously as to what Aristotle means. Drawing their own interpretations on these ancient texts, scholars raise, and attempt to explain, various questions regarding Aristotle's opinions on women. More specifically, these questions include women's role within marriage and the household, a woman's position as an

active member of the city, and women's status as biologically equal or inferior, as a sex, to males. The opinions of scholars on Aristotle oftentimes vary greatly and this is informed by a level of incoherence bedeviling Aristotle's view on women. Aristotle interprets his teachings with so many conflicting views. What does this say about Aristotle's place in history of philosophy? What we found out from these scholars is that our modern speculation of Aristotle is going to fail to catch in on Aristotle's viewpoint if we do not consult his texts extensively enough and if we do not understand it within the context of his time; the socio-political state of Athens.

According to Javier Martinez, there are lots of incoherence in Aristotle's work which oftentimes permit different interpretations of his work. In his words:

One is forced to proceed with the disagreeable task of reading and analyzing Aristotle's account of slavery because there is such divergence in the opinions of the expert scholars. If one takes a look at Aristotle's account of slavery, one will notice that on the one hand, Aristotle believes that slavery cannot be demonstrated as acceptable on the basis of weak arguments, but, on the other hand, he would indirectly advocate the enslavement of those who are not slaves by nature. Although scholars disagree about Aristotle's account of slavery, there is one point of consensus: his account is filled with incoherency and inconsistency.<sup>72</sup>

As Richard Mulgan points out, there are roughly three major camps on the issue of Aristotle's sexist views. The first consists of the commentators writing before 1970 such as E. Barker, W.L. Newman, and W.D. Ross. They did indeed question Aristotle's ethics regarding slavery, but when it came to women they tended to see Aristotle as a humane family man and thus were silent on criticism. The second camp is composed of scholars such as S.M. Okin and J.B. Elshtain. Noticing the patriarchal implications of Aristotle's texts, they denounce Aristotle as a sexist and blame him for his compliance and even advocacy of the lower status of women. Both of these groups share the same view of Aristotle's bias towards women; only later writers were more offended due to the development of the feminist movement. H. L. Levy, from the third group of writers, believes Aristotle has quite the opposite intention and attempts to affirm Aristotle's status as a female sympathizer. Part of Levy's investigation cites text from Aristotle's *History of Animals*, which is ironic because this text is perhaps the most popular source of hypothetical evidence branding Aristotle a sexist. Levy's interpretation includes statements such as, "In History of Animals, Aristotle finds women to be superior in

every intellectual characteristic worth noting. Women are more apt at rational learning, more considerate about the rearing of the young, and, more retentive in memory.”<sup>73</sup> This quote summarizes Levy’s claim that Aristotle was actually a champion for women’s rights and a feminist. He also points to passages in *Nicomachean Ethics* concerning *phronesis*, or prudence, and deduces that, in his listing of women’s chief virtues, Aristotle was hinting that women had a greater tendency for prudence than men.

Leah Bradshaw shares this view on the importance of prudence in political leadership, and points to passages in *Politics* where she writes “Importantly, while Aristotle emphasizes prudence's application to practical, variable human activity, and sees its value as lying particularly in the running of political and household affairs, he nevertheless categorizes prudence as an intellectual virtue, indeed as one of the two highest intellectual virtues”<sup>74</sup> The virtue prudence is critical for a good ruler, and based on this assumption one might conclude that Aristotle used his rhetorical skill to blanket his true intentions, which were to covertly suggest that women should be recognized citizens and make political decisions, and even hold political power. This could not be openly stated as such because Athenian male citizens were naturally accustomed to their lofty positions as rulers and feared any change in social order, especially if their political influence was threatened.

Hence the analysis of Aristotle’s views on women, and how those views have been debated by scholars, leads one to wonder how he developed his ethical beliefs, and how today’s ethicists, working in a far more complex society, relate to his teachings. When it comes to ethics, we cannot so easily say that Aristotle was wrong. The importance of his teachings on this subject cannot be disputed because the ethical quandaries he presents within the texts are still relevant to our modern day. Science and technology have answered much more than Aristotle ever touched on in his endeavours, but technology cannot tell one how to live with virtue and lead a good life with others. Aristotle’s ethical philosophy is certainly his strongest field of study and is most relevant to us because his works on this subject, most scholars agree, accents the goodness of wisdom and rational living. In this wise, our basic position is that no individual is disadvantaged by sex to attain virtue given the same educational opportunities.

Let us now turn attention at this juncture to one critic of Aristotle’s virtue theory in person of Lawrence Kohlberg. Kohlberg considered that the ethical and educational ideas in his theory of moral development could be seen as a modern statement of the

Socratic view of these matters. In forging this alliance he was particularly critical of what he called Aristotle's 'bag of virtues' view with its insistence on the role of habit, or 'learning by doing', in the development of moral virtue. More immediately, the account of stages of moral development which Kohlberg began to devise in the early 1960s took its inspiration from Piaget's general theory of cognitive development and, more specifically his account of moral thinking among children.<sup>75</sup> Kohlberg also followed Piaget in espousing an essentially Kantian conception of morality in terms of universal ethical principles of justice rationally grasped by the autonomous individual. Among other sources, Kohlberg was also much influenced by John Dewey's theory of the educational growth of the child through invariant, ordered sequential stages into adulthood; but he was not convinced by Dewey's ethical naturalism and challenged his support for an Aristotelian-type view of habit formation. Kohlberg's attitude to Aristotelian ethics was shaped importantly by his familiarity with well-known studies in psychology concerned with moral education and the virtues. The example of such work was the study by Hartshorne and May in which school-age children were tested for virtues such as honesty and self-control in situations offering opportunities for telling lies, cheating and stealing. The study indicated positive correlation between virtue or character education, and actual practice of the virtues, was low; and the authors were drawn to conclude that, while we can identify honest and dishonest acts, we are not entitled to speak of honest or dishonest people.

To Kohlberg, moral education in the virtues, and the view of morality it embodied, was thus discredited. He would describe it as the 'bag of virtues' view or the 'Boy Scout' approach ('be honest, loyal, brave...'). That the 'Boy Scout' approach nevertheless continued to dominate American moral education could be attributed in part to the influence of Dewey; but its most direct affinities, Kohlberg considered, were with the views of Aristotle. In a word, a certain conception of Aristotelian ethics and its traces in American educational practice constituted the problem for which the young Kohlberg sought a solution. Kohlberg's attempt was to come up with an account of moral development based on the identification of graded forms of moral reasoning specifically in relation to questions of justice. Given the idea that reasoning in the moral sphere could be correlated with more general patterns of cognitive development, the proposal carried the prospect of an account of moral development which could be tested empirically and which would be universal. In these scientific and open terms, the new approach would

provide the basis for an acceptable and effective programme of moral education, especially in the enlightened liberal state where questions of justice could be taken to be paramount.

At the same time, the focus on moral reasoning could draw support from the respected figures of Kant and Socrates as marking out, in their ethical thinking, the highest level or end-point of moral development for human beings generally. Furthermore, it could be shown that an Aristotelian-type approach, based on the attempt to inculcate moral virtues, belongs to a lower, more immature stage of moral awareness. With all this far-reaching promise, the Kohlbergian research program in moral psychology emerged rapidly into prominence in the 1960s and was established as the dominant theory in the field by the early 1970s.

Kohlberg's central thesis is that there are six stages of moral development, marked by distinct and developing ways of thinking about questions of right and wrong. The stages are grouped into three levels of social awareness viz: pre-conventional, conventional and post-conventional. The pre-conventional level consists of two stages. Stage one is regarded as stage of Punishment and Obedience wherein Right is literal obedience to rules and authority, avoiding punishment, and not doing physical harm. The reasons why the child will do the right thing is purely to avoid punishment and the superior power of authorities. The second stage is the stage of Individual Instrumental Purpose and Exchange. Here, rights mean serving one's own or other's needs and making fair deals in terms of concrete exchange. The reason for doing right is to serve one's own needs or interests in a world where one must recognise and acknowledge that other people have their interests, too. The Conventional Level also has two stages viz: The Stage of Mutual Interpersonal Expectations, Relationships and Conformity and Social System and Conscience Maintenance. The first stage of this level is predicated on the right as playing a good role, being concerned about the other people and their feelings, keeping loyalty and trust with partners, and being motivated to follow rules and expectations. The motivation for doing right is to prove to oneself to be good in one's own eyes and those of others; caring for other. The Stage four is of Social System and Conscience Maintenance. This entails the right to doing one's duty in society, upholding the social order, and maintaining the welfare of society or the group. The motivation at this stage is to keep the institution going as a whole, self-respect or conscience as meeting one's defined obligations. The last level is called Post-conventional and

Principled Level with two stages. The fifth stage is the Stage of Prior Rights and Social Contract or Utility .It consists of the right of upholding the basic rights, values and legal contracts of a society, even when they conflict with the concrete rules and laws of the group. The reasons for doing right are, in general, feeling obligated to obey the law because one has made a social contract to make and abide by laws for the good of all and to protect their own rights and the rights of others. Moral agent is concerned that laws and duties be based on rational calculation or overall utility. The last stage is called the Stage of Universal Ethical Principles. This stage assumes guidance by universal ethical principles that all humanity should follow. According to Kohlberg, Principles are universal principles of justice:

the equality of human rights and respect for the dignity of human beings as individuals...The reason for doing right is that, as a rational person, one has seen the validity of principles and has become committed to them.<sup>76</sup>

The identification of stages was made in line with cross-sectional and longitudinal studies of the ways in which children and adolescents— all male subjects—responded to a series of hypothetical dilemmas involving conflicts of rights. While the specified stages and the scoring system underwent modifications over the years, the substance of Kohlberg's major claims remained unchanged.

The stages are presented as distinct, qualitatively different ways of thinking about the same problems. Each stage is a 'structured whole' which marks out a consistent pattern of thinking, which is held distinguishable from the actual content of responses. The stages are hierarchical integrations, forming an invariant sequence from less to more integrated structures of increasing differentiation, generality and adequacy. The invariant sequence, which holds universally, is not affected substantially by epoch or culture, or by class or gender difference. Movement through the stages occurs on the model of an interaction between the individual and external structures, especially the social environment.

Finally, the six stages form a complete set, although to cope with anomalous data Kohlberg later introduced sub-stages at the conventional level and a transitional Stage 4 between the conventional and post-conventional levels, and he speculated about a 'seventh stage' of higher morality incorporating, but going beyond, justice.

The empirical studies, involving a complex scoring system, carried the promise of showing how subjects, from early childhood through to maturity, are distributed across

the six stages. The resultant pattern would be explained in turn by the general data relating to cognitive development, associated importantly with age, level of experience, and the social environment. In general, children up to around ten were found to be at stage 1 or 2; adolescents were normally assigned to Stage 3 or 4; from the beginning, Stages 5 and 6 were taken to define an adult level of attainment.

Crittenden Paul in his article “Justice, care and other virtues” queried how Kohlberg arrives at his account of levels and stages of moral development. He equally debunks the supposition that the stage descriptions were derived from (empirical) data. He argues that this response is completely implausible, especially for Stages 5 and 6. Kohlberg himself made clear that his psychological theory ‘grew out of... Kant’s formal theory in moral philosophy and Piaget’s formal theory in psychology’ and that, from the start, the psychological inquiry was guided by (Kantian) epistemological and ethical principles. Specifically, Kohlberg drew on Kantian ideas on lines which were being developed contemporaneously by John Rawls. The psychological theory, grounded on the philosophical claim that the stages become progressively more adequate in moral terms, supposed that individuals would advance as far as their understanding would take them.<sup>77</sup> But, as Kohlberg acknowledged, the philosophical claim would be put in question if the facts of moral advance did not fit with its psychological implications. As previously held by Piaget, in any structural contexts, the pyramid of knowledge does not so much rest on foundations as suspended by its vertex, the ideal point towards which it moves. In other words, the idea of universal ethical principles focused on justice played this critical role in driving Kohlberg’s research program. The fundamental ethical assumption of Kohlberg is that ‘the core of morality and moral development is deontological, that is, morality is a matter of rights and duties as prescribed. Morality is conceived in terms of the formal character of moral judgements independently of content; thus the primary marks of moral judgement are impersonality, impartiality, universalisability and pre-emptiveness; and such properties are to be looked for in the reasoning on which moral judgement properly rests. More specifically, the core of mature deontological morality is indicated fundamentally in principles of justice.’<sup>78</sup>

The assumption of the primacy of justice is linked with Kohlberg’s conviction that morality is primarily concerned with the resolution of conflicts between competing claims of individuals or groups:

Moral judgments or principles have the central function of resolving interpersonal or social conflicts; that is, conflicts of

claims or rights. Such judgments also define duties relative to these rights. Thus moral judgments and principles imply a notion of equilibrium, balancing, or reversibility of claims<sup>79</sup>

Following Rawls, Kohlberg was satisfied that if one imagines a society ordered by a social contract among equals (as in Stage 5), one could derive principles of justice or equal rights (Stage 6 morality) as the only foundation to which rational individuals would consent in the hypothetical original position from which the contract is determined. Kohlberg's summary of the Socratic view involves three principal claims: one, that virtue is one, not many, and that it has the same ideal universal form, the name of which is justice; two, that virtue is knowledge of the good (the good being justice); and three, that one who knows the good chooses it<sup>80</sup>

In appropriating loosely recognizable Socratic theses, Kohlberg strengthens his case for the primacy of justice. However, while it is true that Socrates argued that virtue is knowledge of the good, he did not hold that virtue and the good, of which it is knowledge, bears the name justice. Given Plato's early dialogues, Socrates recognised a number of virtues, principally courage, temperance, justice and wisdom. Socrates came to the conclusion that the virtues are all one, that is, knowledge of good and evil on the premise that virtue taken on the lines of a craft is basically a form of knowledge which ensures virtuous action. Also, for Socrates what is true of justice in this respect is no less true of courage or temperance. Hence, the idea of virtue as knowledge of the good does not dispense the need for the virtues named by courage, self-control, justice and so on.

More generally, the claims that virtue is constituted essentially by knowledge and that there is just one virtue, knowledge of the good, are not easily defensible (as Plato's later dialogues indicate). But even if the Socratic claims could be defended, they do not lend support to the Kohlbergian assumption that all moral issues are fundamentally matters of justice, or to his remarkable claim that justice is mainly about settling conflicts and that most social situations are not moral, because there is no conflict between the role-taking expectations of one person and another<sup>81</sup>

Kohlberg in response to criticism explained that, given the primacy of justice, he picked reasoning in this domain as 'the cognitive factor most amenable to structural developmental stage analysis' and he went on to argue that his theory might be viewed, possibly in retrospect, as a rational reconstruction of the ontogenesis of justice reasoning. Also, Kohlberg's response to Carol Gilligan's *In a different voice* gave consideration to ways of thinking about justice in relation to 'issues of care and response in real life



dilemmas as well as...a concern about the issue of how such dilemmas are resolved in practice'<sup>82</sup> But while Kohlberg was steered to admit that justice is not the whole of morality, this acceptance was made without any revision of the way in which the focus on principles of justice at Stage 6 shapes the specification of each of the stages from beginning to end.<sup>83</sup>

Kohlberg invokes Socrates as mentioned earlier, with the intent of rejecting what he termed Aristotle's 'bag of virtues' view. His objection to Aristotle is that, having separated moral from intellectual virtues, he wrongly infers that moral virtue is acquired, not by teaching, but by habit.<sup>84</sup>

This blanket objection treats the Aristotelian emphasis on 'learning by doing' as a form of mindless habituation effected by indoctrination. This mistaken conclusion warrants two brief comments. First, Kohlberg fails to see the significant role that Aristotle gives to intellectual aspects of moral development. This is apparent in his discussion of choice in virtuous action, for example, and in his account of practical wisdom, especially the insistence that the acquisition of moral virtue involves practice in assessing situations, getting a sense of what is appropriate in concrete circumstances in the light of general considerations, and developing an overall understanding of how one should live. Second, Aristotle is on strong ground in supposing that openness to moral argument, as one grows up, rests importantly on having had a good affective formation in one's early childhood, especially in relationships of love and trust with parents and others.<sup>85</sup>

The Kohlbergian focus on moral reasoning fails to take account of, or simply assumes, the broader context of human relationships in which such argument can have an effective place. More generally, Kohlberg takes the view that virtues are relative to particular conventional cultural standards; that this approach is restricted, therefore, to the conventional level of moral development, Stage 3 or 4; that what counts as a virtue is highly variable; that any attempt to settle on a set of virtues will be largely arbitrary (hence the dismissive phrase 'bag of virtues'); and that the teaching of virtue in this context will be a form of indoctrination.<sup>86</sup>

Also, Kohlberg spuriously reduces ancient arguments for the unity thesis to the uninteresting claim that the best possible person must have all the virtues, since lack of any one virtue would make the person less than ideal. They are not purely conceptual arguments, as arguments in modern ethics often are, but instead rest on views about human psychological development. The ancient conception of virtue represents what

philosophers considered normal human psychology developed to perfection. While such perfection might seldom, if ever, be attained, the ideal always remains rooted in reality to the extent that the best human beings are thought to develop greater and greater integration over time. Empirical evidence about psychological development accordingly has a legitimate place in this debate, and it does tend to cast doubt on claims for some connection between moral virtue and theoretical wisdom. In arguing for a necessary connection between moral virtue and *practical* wisdom, Aristotle aims to preserve the very cognitive element that Kohlberg (strangely) believes Aristotle's theory lacks. Perhaps Kohlberg failed to notice that Aristotle regards appropriate habituation, beginning in early childhood, as only a necessary condition for good moral character in later life. Far from presenting mindless drill as sufficient for true moral virtue, Aristotle insists that one must know why certain actions in given circumstances are just and noble, not merely that they are. Practical wisdom is thought to unify the virtues precisely because the intellectual requirements for genuine virtue are so high. While rejecting Plato's view that moral virtue demands a grasp of mathematics or other such theoretical knowledge, Aristotle preserves a distinction between the practical wisdom necessary for moral virtue and mere correct opinion. To be truly brave, the argument goes, one needs to know not only what courage requires but also what justice requires, what temperance requires, and so on for all the other moral virtues. Virtue requires a correct grasp of one's life as a whole. One's life as a whole, in turn, cannot be considered a mere aggregate of so many specialized domains (the area of justice, the area of courage, and so on), as if sound moral judgement in one area were possible without sound moral judgement in others.<sup>87</sup>

Also, Kohlberg's own theory stands on rather shaky ground, since there is no firm evidence that what he considers improvement in moral reasoning produces improvements in actual behaviour. Analyses of reasoning about real life dilemmas prove to be far better at predicting how individuals actually behave than analyses of reasoning about Kohlbergian hypothetical dilemmas, which tend to minimize emotional involvement and require students to report what they would do in situations they have never experienced and might have difficulty even imagining. As one undergraduate test subject observed, 'It is a lot easier to be moral when you have nothing to lose'. When explaining their reasoning about dilemmas they actually have experienced, not only students but adults routinely appeal to expected consequences (versus principles or intentions alone), to personal relationships (versus only impartial universal norms), and to religious values, all

of which Kohlberg treats as symptomatic of suboptimal moral development. Aristotle excludes religious values as well, but at least his account of moral reasoning is sufficiently complex to approximate normal moral thinking.<sup>88</sup>

There is also the argument, drawn from psychological research that education in the virtues does not work. The overall conclusion to which Kohlberg is drawn is that there are no such things as virtues or vices at all. There are no stable personality traits, or dispositions, of the relevant kind, but rather, 'virtues and vices are labels by which people award praise and blame to others'<sup>89</sup>

The concerns which Kohlberg expresses are not unimportant, as the history of ethics bears witness; on the other hand, the conclusion is drawn too easily and is, in any case, inconsistent with his basic thesis that there is one genuine virtue, namely justice. Kohlberg's defence is that justice is indeed a character trait, but not in the usual sense; not in the manner of honesty or self-control, for example, because it involves universal principles. Having regard for associations between virtues, the question is whether one could say of Socrates that he was a just man, but beg to leave open the question whether he was wise in practical concerns, and an honest, truthful, temperate, or courageous person.

Another significant point is that Kohlberg's theory has a limited conception of social and moral relationships, focused on issues of conflict resolution typically between individuals. Kohlberg's theory is a world of impersonal principles and fundamental rights and duties, in which caring about the people one loves might appear problematic or to lie outside the moral domain altogether. It might also be a world which reflects a predominantly male point of view.<sup>90</sup>

In like manner, Kohlberg's studies stressed the cognitive factors in moral understanding. It should be easy to see in reviewing his stages that the higher levels require more advanced levels of cognitive development. But moral judgments can also be influenced by emotions. This is evident, for example, when a jury bases their verdict not strictly on the right or wrong in a defendant's actions, but also on their impression of his or her character.

To this end, Aristotle's theory of virtue holds more promise in terms of its all-encompassing view of man contrary to modern version on same in relation to moral development. The following three major works of scholars will however be deployed to shed light and in buttressing Aristotle's theory of virtue for the purpose of practically realising the stages of moral development. McIntyre's emphasis on social dimension of

moral development as discussed above. Also, Nodding's care ethics which harps on emotion in moral relationships is another vital theory which shed light on the place of care in morality. Infact, scholar like Raja Halwani has consistently argued that care is essential part of virtue. Halwani doubts the moral status of care ethics outside being incorporated in virtue ethics<sup>91</sup> In this regard, the ethics of care is one important theory that can buffer and strengthen the stage of habituation because of its relational disposition. According to Nel Noddings relations between human beings are cardinal. She construes caring relations as ethically basic<sup>92</sup> In order to be moral, according to Noddings, one must maintain one's self as caring. She calls this view of oneself the "ethical ideal": "We want to be moral in order to remain in the caring relationship and to enhance the ideal of ourselves as one-caring [that is, as givers of care]. It is this ethical ideal ... that guides us as we strive to meet the other morally"<sup>93</sup> This ethical ideal comes from the two sentiments of natural and ethical caring. The former is the natural sympathy we feel for others; it is the sentiment expressed when we want and desire to attend to those we care for, such as a mother's caring for her child. The latter occurs "in response to a remembrance of the first"<sup>94</sup> and it forms the basis of ethical obligation: it is the "I must" that we adhere to when we want to maintain our ethical ideal as one-caring. So even in situations when I find it difficult to engage in caring action, I am under an obligation to do so if I want to be moral, that is, to maintain myself as one-caring. What, however, is involved in caring relations? Noddings claims that for caring to be genuine it has to be for persons in definite relations with the one caring. Though she makes room for the idea that one can expand one's circle of those cared-for (that is, those who are the recipients of care), she insists that genuine caring is not caring for abstract ideas or causes. More specifically, genuine caring involves what Noddings calls "engrossment and motivational displacement."<sup>95</sup> In engrossment, the one-caring attends to the cared-for without judgment and evaluation, and she allows herself to be transformed by the other, while in motivational displacement the one-caring adopts the goals of the cared-for and helps the latter to promote them, directly or indirectly.

This account though has its limits but we shall however concentrate our attention on salient elements that we can incorporate into Aristotle's theory of virtue. We think of care as a virtue, as one virtue, albeit an important one, among those that go into constituting a flourishing life. As a virtue, care would not simply be a natural impulse, but to use Noddings's terminology, also ethical (in Aristotelian terms, it would not be a natural virtue, but one harnessed by reason). This position allows us to maintain what is

most desirable about care ethics. First, consider care ethics insistence on the idea that human beings are not abstract individuals who morally relate to each other following principles such as justice and non-violation of autonomy. One of virtue ethics main claims is that we are social animals who need to negotiate the ways we are to deal and live with each other.<sup>96</sup> With this general claim about our sociality, Virtue ethics also claims that without certain types of relationships we will not flourish. Without friends and family members, human beings will lead impoverished lives, being unable to partake in the pleasures of associating with people with whom they can trust and share their joys, sorrows, and activities. It is not just that intimate relationships are instrumental to flourishing, but that they are also part and parcel of a flourishing life. According to Noddings, intimate relationships "are not external conditions of [virtuous] activities, like money or power. Rather, they are the form virtuous activity takes when it is especially fine and praiseworthy"<sup>97</sup> Virtue ethics, then, gives pride of place to care ethics insistence on the sociality of human life and to its emphasis on the importance of certain types of relations such as those of friendship and family.

However, one might object that while care ethics takes human relationships to be ontologically basic, Virtue ethics does not. Instead, it takes the individual as ontologically basic and the individual's flourishing as ethically basic. If so, then virtue ethics does not take caring for others as ethically basic. But then virtue ethics would not incorporate care ethics claims well and would not seriously accommodate its central claims. The objection raises a serious worry, but much depends on what we mean by "ethically basic" and on how we construe the claims of virtue ethics. It is true that virtue ethics takes the concept of flourishing to be basic in important respects. First, virtue ethics is not narrowly act-centred as are some other theories, and in this respect, it takes seriously the issue of what a well-lived life is.

Second, virtue ethics, as a neo-Aristotelian theory, claims that it is rational to be virtuous because being virtuous provides one's best chance to lead a flourishing life.<sup>98</sup> But from these claims, it does not follow that flourishing is ethically basic in the sense that it gives virtuous agents moral license to violate the claims of others, be these strangers or intimates, when the agent's flourishing is at stake. The virtues are constitutive of a flourishing life; we need to be virtuous if we are to flourish. But being virtuous is not a tactic an agent adopts when it so suits the agent. Having the virtues requires time, effort, and good upbringing. When one has the virtues, one has, among other things, the right values, thoughts, and emotions with respect to what is good and

bad, right and wrong, worthwhile and not worthwhile. And this implies that being virtuous is compatible with, and often requires, sacrifices, sometimes of one's own self. With the above remarks in mind, and given the thesis that care should be thought of as a virtue, a virtuous, caring agent would act in a caring manner, and would feel the requisite emotions, when the situation calls for care. Hence in the process of habituation, care remains an essential ingredient at helping the children habituate in to virtuous activities.

Another important element that is crucial in moral development of the young children as enunciated by Aristotle has to do with practical wisdom that is achieved by the moral agents on the basis of continuous moral reasoning. This route to achieving this capacity by moral agents can be attained by the incorporation of Jurgen Habermas idea of discourse in which norms are examined with the aim of reaching a communicative agreement. According to him, in virtue of its pragmatic characteristics, discourse can guarantee insightful will-formation in which the interests of each individual are given their say without breaking the prior social bond which joins all those oriented towards reaching understanding. A discursively achieved agreement depends simultaneously on the non-substitutable 'yes' or 'no' positions of each individual and on the overcoming of the egocentric perspective required of all participants in an argumentative praxis.<sup>99</sup> In this exercise, discursive efforts attempts a rational reconstruction of the contents of a moral tradition that is devoid of religious foundations. The discourse principle tries to resolve a predicament in which the members of any moral community find themselves when, in making the transition to a modern, pluralistic society, they face the dilemma that, while they still argue about moral judgments and beliefs with reasons, an encompassing value-consensus on basic moral norms has been shattered. They are entangled in action conflicts in need of regulation, and they still regard them as moral and hence as rationally resolvable conflicts, although their shared ethos has disintegrated. As the participants do not wish to resolve these conflicts through violence or even compromise, but through communication, their initial impulse is immediately to engage in deliberation and work out a shared ethical self-understanding. But under the differentiated social conditions of pluralistic societies they will soon realise that their strong evaluations lead to competing conceptions of the good. If the participants remain steadfast in their resolve to engage in deliberation and not abandon the moral regulation of their coexistence for a negotiated *modus vivendi*, they find that, in the absence of a substantive agreement on particular norms, they must rely on the 'neutral' circumstance that each of them participates in some communicative form of life-a form of life which is

structured by linguistically mediated understanding. Since such communicative processes and forms of life have certain structural aspects in common, they might further ask whether these features contain normative contents that could form a basis for shared orientations.

Hence, the participants in the discourse find themselves constantly falling back on those common features they currently share as a result of having undertaken the cooperative endeavour of practical reasoning. The actual situation of performing a deliberative practice certainly affords an opportunity in view of the predicament posed by the pluralism of worldviews.<sup>100</sup> The prospect of an equivalent for the traditional substance of a received value consensus exists when the form of communication in which the joint deliberation takes place offers an aspect under which a justification of moral norms would be possible in virtue of its impartiality

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

The implication and relevance of the above to our work lie in the opportunity for communicative social interaction which inducts the child into the social world—not only of moral actions, but also of moral discussion and argument—with the result that the child becomes progressively able to internalize the mechanisms of public dialogue as private thinking. The child, often assisted by explicit intervention from more capable reasoners, becomes increasingly capable of entering what Habermas calls practical discourse, in dialogue and in reflection. One distinctive idea of moral discourse is not to find universal laws but a general law that will be agreed to be a universal norm. In this way it is possible to escape from mindless acceptance of given rules and from mindless relativism which suggests there are no moral norms at all. The only norms that can claim to be valid,' says Habermas, 'are those that meet (or could meet) with the approval of all affected in their capacity as participants in a practical discourse'<sup>101</sup> Traditional African moral values can now form basis of discourse within the western values in our society such that we are not throwing away important values that promote humanity and advance interpersonal relationships that are cardinal to achieving a flourishing life.

According to virtue ethics, what is primary for ethics is not, as deontologists and utilitarians hold, the judgment of acts or their consequences based purely on rules and principles, but the judgment of agents. The good person is the fundamental category for moral philosophy, and the good person is the person of good character, the person who possesses moral virtue.<sup>102</sup> Aristotle is still widely held to be its finest exponent. This

approach has a very close affinity with African world view. Also, the interpretive exposition and presentation of values generated by traditional African societies covers many aspects of the African cultural life. Although, it is important to note that talking about African cultural values does not imply that by any means there are no negative cultural disvalues or negative aspects of the African cultures. There are, of course many of it. This is because some cultural beliefs, practices and institutions that are regarded as cultural values may be regarded as cultural disvalues by others. Or even some aspects of what one regards as cultural values may require some refinement. Nevertheless, traditions need to be evaluated. The main reason for focusing on cultural values here is that some of these cultural values require appropriate and necessary amendment and refinement in order to be relevant to African modernity<sup>103</sup>

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## CHAPTER FIVE

### EVOLVING A MORAL SYSTEM FOR NIGERIAN EDUCATION

#### 5.1 Introduction

Human societies have always had problems and people have always sought solutions to such problems. The education sector has always been one of the first points of call to seek headways to social ills. As such, it has always been the preoccupation of educational thinkers to set goals for education in order to use education to 'create' the kind of human beings required to transform society. Hence, this chapter proposes to emphasise an all-embracing conception of education wherein cognitive and moral development of persons are taken seriously in Nigerian educational system. We shall also in this chapter abstract from Aristotle's theory of virtue with intent to supply the missing link in Nigerian educational system so as to help construct an holistic view of education. This effort will assist in addressing the problems of moral vices in Nigerian educational system and by extension, Nigerian society.

#### 5.2 Holistic Education

As highlighted in previous chapters, the prevalent moral decadence and vices in Nigerian schools is partly accounted for by a one-sided understanding of what education connotes. Hitherto, education and educational achievement in Nigeria have been conceived in terms of cognitive attainment/achievement. This situation is reflected in the mad rush for certification. The attendant moral crisis of such endeavour unfortunately received a wrong prognosis and solution. It is in this wise that Omoregbe laments thus: "since learned men began to appear among us good men have disappeared"<sup>1</sup>. It is the disappearance of good men, brought about by replacement of African values with western civilization of individualism and materialism, which multiplies the occurrence of different forms of moral problems within the school system and the Nigerian society in general. To forestall this negative trend requires evolving a moral system in Nigerian educational system to reflect holistic understanding of education which coheres with African worldview. Merriam-Webster dictionary defines evolution as the process to develop and change gradually over a long period of time. It also conceives it as a process in which an event or series of events is carefully examined in order to find out or show exactly what happened.<sup>2</sup> Another definition from Longman Dictionary sees evolution as the process to develop and change gradually over a long period of time.<sup>3</sup> Evolving can

then be taken to mean a process to develop and change. The word 'evolution' has other related concepts such as growth, development, progression, and renewal. What all of these connote is making our education to gradually become anew through conscious adjustment from what it is now. Evolving a moral system in Nigerian education entails a balance between intellect and morals. The focus on morality as an integral part of education is an urgent one in the course of change and development. The most important aspect in evolving a moral system is effecting gradual change in the moral development of human persons in our educational institutions. Moral maturity is a crucial mark of human development, and it is the most important aspect in any educational endeavour. We cannot talk of development of a country if its citizens are morally undeveloped and immature. The moral development of students/citizens must balance comfortably with the intellectual development otherwise the process of education would be obstructed by the immorality of the citizens as presently witnessed in Nigeria. For, the immorality of its citizens is the greatest and most formidable obstacle to the educational development of this country. Husaini Mango in lamenting the problem of underdevelopment in Nigeria queries:

How can there be development in a country where egoism prevails? How can there be development in a country where public funds intended for developmental projects are diverted into private and selfish ends? How can the economy of a country develop if citizens lack a sense of duty, a sense of moral responsibility and social accountability? How can there be development in a country in which liberty and corruption break down law and order? Which kind of development can we expect in a country in which law enforcement agents (especially the Police Force, the Custom and Immigration officials) can easily be bribed by criminals and economic saboteurs? What kind of development can we expect in a country whose government officials defraud their fatherland of millions of Naira in collaboration with foreigners? What kind of development can there be in a country where intellectuals and teachers are enslaved to illusions, opinion, false beliefs, and religion of money worship, where money is God?<sup>4</sup>

According to Fafunwa, every society whether simple or complex has its own system of training and educating its youths towards good life. In the old Africa, education plays significant role as tool for induction of the youths into the society and preparation for adulthood. Education in the old Africa emphasized social responsibility and moral values. It was an integrated experience that combines other forms of training

with character building.<sup>5</sup> Also Osaat, S.D. observed that traditional education projected character training. According to him, education then was an aggregate of all the activities by which a child or young adult develops the ability, attitudes and other forms of behavior which are of positive values to the society he lives. Through this medium, the traditional African society was able to evolve a system of co-existence in which everyone has concern for the welfare of every other person and was able to establish a morally upright society.<sup>6</sup> It is based on this strength of traditional education that emphasised ethics and values to achieve a peaceful society that we want to restate the meaning of education.

From the foregoing, we shall quickly do a recap of what education is. This will help put in perspective the process of reconstructing Nigerian educational system. The term education has been defined and conceptualized in a number of ways; Nnabuo Peter and Asodike Juliana citing Okoh see education as a process, a product, and a discipline. As a process, it is the activity of preserving, developing, and transmitting the culture of a people from one generation to another. As a product it refers to change, whether overt or covert, implicit or explicit, which education is expected to bring about. They further stress that the product of education is the educated man, who in the African context is one “who shows evidence of a well-integrated personality ... he is economically efficient, socially and politically competent, morally acceptable and intellectually and culturally sophisticated”.<sup>7</sup> Nnabuo Peter and Asodike Juliana quoting Ukeje summed it up when they opined that

Education is power, it is a process of acquiring knowledge and ideas that shape and condition man's attitude, actions and achievements; it is a process of developing the child's moral, physical, emotional and intellectual power for his contribution in social reform; it is the process of mastering the laws of nature and for utilizing them effectively for the welfare of the individual and for social reconstruction; it is the art of the utilization of knowledge for complete living.<sup>8</sup>

Education involves skills development, engagement of learner's mental and emotional dispositions. Education is also meant to promote thoughtful responses and critical awareness amongst learners. Worthwhile education entails positive development of the personhood. Educating a whole person is diametrically opposed to a one-dimensional approach such as purely knowledge acquisition or cognitive development of the mind as

presently obtained in Nigeria. Martin Buber argued, “Education worthy of the name is essentially education of character”, of “always the person as a whole...”<sup>9</sup>

In Plato’s view, education has a holistic and harmonious aspect, where the learner’s ‘true’ nature, being understood as virtuous, needs to be ‘led out’ through education. The concept of holistic education deals with broad notion than knowledge acquisition or development of the intellect only- ethical development also being essential. A holistic approach has to do with the whole person in the sense that he or she is multidimensional, and the purpose of education therefore “is to assist in the formation of better people”<sup>10</sup>

In essence, education implies the transmission of knowledge, values, norms to the young generation or new members for the benefit of making the recipients become useful to himself, his society and also for the perpetuation of the society. It is a binding duty of the society to transmit its essential moral heritage to the next one so as to ensure its perpetuation. This intergenerational transmission of cultural heritage is in fact the primary meaning of education. Again, such transmission forbids intentional suppression of the recipient voluntariness and wittingness. According to Pai Obanya, transformation of Africa should not lose sight of the deep roots of education by being seriously anchored on the people’s moral values so that we do not make the people extinct by destroying their culture.<sup>11</sup> The point we are making is that a functional education extends beyond being competent in a field of study or in a trade but in addition, a familiarity with the environment in terms of norms and values that sustain interrelationship within the society and beyond. The emphasis on teaching moral values is crucial because it sustains not only intrapersonal, interpersonal relationships but also plays a role in sustaining political, economic, scientific and technological practices. Moral values to a reasonable extent are cultural construction though changing at peripheral level over time and varying minimally from culture to culture. As Clive Beck will argue, morality or moral values are human creations in accordance with their varied interests, traditions, and circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

To become educated is to learn to become a person. A person is a material object with 'a form of consciousness' and 'some set of concepts through which experience is ordered and made sense of. Persons possess 'intentionality'. They also possess the concept of a person which makes possible moral relations and self-understanding. Human beings have to become persons to differ from other lower animals. Personhood in recent times



has been used to refer to educating a whole person and is contrasted with a uni-dimensional approach such as purely knowledge acquisition or cognitive development of the mind. Buber argued, “Education worthy of the name is essentially education of character”, of “always the person as a whole.”<sup>13</sup>

Michael Merry and William New cited Carol Lee’s questioning of what will constitute appropriate education for Africans thus:

What manner of education will mold the African personality to thrive in a culture that has demeaned its character, denied its existence, and coordinated its destruction? How shall we sing our sacred song in a strange land?<sup>14</sup>

The above is a tact summation of how much western culture has submerged our way of life and reduced those moral values that are relevant to sustain our society to nothingness. Nigerian, nay African education continuously become oblivious to those cardinal objectives inherent in traditional African society as enunciated by scholars like Babs Fafunwa and Olu Osokoya thus:

1. To develop the child’s latent physical skills;
2. To develop character
3. To inculcate respect for elders and those in position of authority;
4. To develop intellectual skills
5. To acquire specific vocational training and to develop a healthy attitude towards honest labour;
6. To develop a sense of belonging and to participate actively in family and community affairs
7. To understand, appreciate and promote the cultural heritage of the community at large.<sup>15</sup>

The only instrument the indigenous African society adopted to ensure probity in the society was the value system. People were guided by the ethics of behavior and unethical behaviours received due punishment from the leaders and the society at large. The African civilization then developed a set of techniques which enables the society to identify socio-political and axiological problems such as conflict and crisis, and seek appropriate solution through values and ethics. Osaat noted that a good system of moral education is the best agent to such ethical dynamism without which a society could slack back in the scheme of things.<sup>16</sup> Fafunwa observed that through this medium, the

traditional African society was able to evolve a system of co-existence in which everyone has concern for the welfare of every other person and was able to establish a crisis free society.<sup>17</sup> If values and ethics can achieve such success in those days, it can still repeat the same in the contemporary society, if integrated into the modern system of education.

The ethical aspect is needed to complement the present focus which is directed towards development of intellectual skills and professional training. Nigerian educational system, which is basically cognitive in orientation vigorously, pursues social, political and economic development with the intent that science and technology are the basic driving force to attain the desired society. In this wise, the government is interested in spending a large chunk of her educational budget on science and technology curriculum and on educating science and technology students.<sup>18</sup> The Arts and Social sciences are to share the lesser proportion of the educational budget. One of the consequences of this is the production of society with lopsided education. Ironically, the product of this educational system dipped the society in all manners of socio-economic crises. The political landscape is the most interesting area where the moral crises become prominent. According to Chris Agulanna, “A defining feature of African life appears to be the enthronement of political immorality as a social norm among the people”<sup>19</sup> I.E. Ukpokolo however avers that “The essential meaning of the domination of man over his world consists in the priority of ethics over politics and technology...”<sup>20</sup> Toyin Falola in his *Convocation Lecture* at Tai Solarin University of Education painted a sordid but true picture of Nigerian education system thus:

Nigerian parents...push their children who are not academically sound to pursue courses in engineering, medicine, etc. to probably massage the parental ego, rather than encourage them to do what they are best at, and interested in! Well, it works for now because we have examination system rather than an education system, so that what counts is...the attainment of certificates and qualifications”<sup>21</sup>

What passes for education in Nigeria is not essentially desirable. One reason being that the products boast of certificates and qualifications that are more often secured through corrupt means. In this wise, Falola insists that character education is important. In his words,

...many graduates of our universities today lack moral premonitions. This explains the high level of corruption among university graduates in politics, the civil service, and in private life. There have been many cases of armed robbers known to speak the Queen's English as they engage in diabolical and nocturnal activities. Many students have found joining cults relevant to their schooling experiences. This has been reported in as high up as graduate schools in Nigeria and as low in elementary schools. Education without morals, then, is a recipe for social disaster!<sup>22</sup>

The lesson we are drawing from here is the primacy of moral education in shaping our conduct both privately and publicly. The failure of Nigerian educational system in this regard has continuously left a sour taste in our mouth. Nigerian educational system needs a balancing of the facets of education. Agulanna quoting Famoroti strongly maintains that the goal of education is not merely the intellectual development of person; rather, it should also guide him in learning a culture, moulding his behaviour in the ways of adulthood, and guiding him towards his eventual role in society.<sup>23</sup> Otonti Nduka in the same vein highlights some key traditional African values, which other scholars have identified or restated, which are germane to evolving moral values thus: respect for humanity and human dignity, sense of community, mutual aid, hospitality, respect for legitimate and humane authority, courage and gallantry, and respect for authentic and positive African moral values.<sup>24</sup> It is in this sense that Aristotle's discourse of education becomes germane. From chapter four, we saw how Aristotle blend and emphasise intellectual and moral dimension of education as crucial to human excellence and by extension, he recognises the place of culture in his moral articulation. In his words,

Having then in regard to this subject established its essential that everybody able to live according to his own purposive choice should set before him some object for noble living to aim at"—either honour or else glory or wealth or culture on which he keeps his eyes fixed in all his conduct (since clearly it is a mark of much folly not to have one's life regulated with regard to some end), it is therefore most necessary first to decide within oneself, neither hastily nor carelessly, in which of the things that belong to us the good life consists, and what are the indispensable conditions for men's possessing it.<sup>25</sup>

In this regard, the development of intellect/cognitive related skills in the areas of science, medicine, arts, commerce and technology is an aspect that needed to be strengthened in the light of contemporary realities. That is, in meeting the societal needs in terms of viable economy, health care services, security shelter provision for Nigerians

but the fact remains that this can only be properly positioned when moral issues are effectively addressed in the education programme of the citizens. We shall therefore move to the missing link in Nigerian educational system using Aristotle's theory in its reconstruction.

### **5.3 A Case for the Introduction of Moral Education in Nigerian Educational System**

Moral education is an integral part of education. It is that aspect that builds the character of those who go through the education system of the society. Often, this important aspect is left to chance with a 'naïve' belief that this will be caught. More terribly, the western education with its inherent cultural underpinnings completely suffocated the ineluctable cultural imperative of African society. Whereas, no education worth its name can be conducted without its cultural relevance. It is in this light that Aristotle argues that leading the good life involves following the cultural traditions and speaking the language of ones own culture or ethnic group. He even accuses Phaleas of neglecting the role of culture and moral education in securing justice and peace.<sup>26</sup> Essentially, we intend here to adapt Aristotle's theory to suit our purpose. This we are doing because of the cardinal affinity of this theory to African orientation in moral education. The interest of this work in Aristotle's virtue theory is the cardinal importance he placed on habituation of important virtues within a cultural milieu that are germane to the moral improvement of individuals and for the good of society.

What stands Aristotle's classical works on theory of virtue from theories of other scholars is not just the involvement of the home or the environment of the child but also the realities of the psychological nature of man. As we have extensively mentioned in chapter four, the moral development of the child is a complex one but not unachievable. The home, the state (school) and the child are all involved in the onerous task of raising a virtuous citizen in a child. Aristotle's abstracted model of moral education remains significant in reconstructing Nigerian educational system because it pays attention to human natural experience as key to moral evolvement and this is similar to what obtain in traditional Nigerian society nay Africa. The essential role of home and the early childhood education in habituating the child is really instructive. Also, Aristotle's account avoids muddling moral education with religion. This coheres with the position of scholars on the relationship between morality and religion. A good number of African scholars agree that morality has a social foundation and interestingly, this also applies in

Aristotle's theory of virtue. In the next section, I will begin to appropriate Aristotle's views on moral education as mentioned in chapter four. Thereafter, we shall examine African scholars' position on the basis of morality and by extension, moral education; also we shall mention some cultural medium of educating children in morals and finally, I will highlight the implication of this in Nigerian educational system.

### **5.3.1 Habituation**

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, virtue in Aristotle's view, makes us morally responsible not only for our actions but for our emotions, including the extent to which these emotions are manifested in our dispositions for actions. If one's morality is assessed in accordance with one's character and with the character traits of a virtuous person as a standard, it is easy to see that emotions are part of such an evaluation, because they are manifestations of one's character features. Of course, to be held responsible for our emotions, we must have a choice about them. That is to say, we have to be able to change them, to feel differently at will. But if emotions are passive states of mind that is, if they happen to us only, it is not clear how they can be matters of choice.

Aristotle firmly believed that the cultivation of character from early childhood must include the cultivation of emotions, thus allowing us to praise or blame emotional states. It is possible to reconcile the cultivation of emotions with the view of emotions as passive states of mind by distinguishing between emotions as states of mind and emotional development. Emotions come to us as we act, but we experience different emotions and at different levels of intensity as we grow up and acquire experience in our interactions with others. This emotional change can be guided. In Aristotle's views, the guidance of this change is the first stage of moral education. Though John Dewey, acknowledged emotional (among others) change, but refused to direct it. Aristotle considered such direction imperative for moral education. In the next section we shall outline the stages of education which the first two are predominantly habituation.

### **5.3.2 Pre-Primary/Early Childhood Education**

It is important to say that the home is recognised by both Aristotle and the Nigerian society as key to the upbringing of the child, particularly the moral upbringing. In our our classification here, the responsibility of the home spills into the school activities and vice-versa to align with contemporary reality. Beginning from the early childhood, the programme of moral education is expected to take off. At the early age of two or three,

moral education are concerned primarily with training the non-rational part of the soul through proper habituation.<sup>27</sup> At this particular period of early childhood education, the child's rationality is least developed. Here, there will be little or no formal instruction required. Rather, the basic responsibility of the moral educator (oftentimes the parents or early childhood educator) will be in charge of supervising the child and to regulate those things such as music, stories (the music and stories are to serve dual purpose: pleasure and the content to have moral implications) and people that the children are exposed to do not exhibit immoral dispositions to prevent the children from becoming mean and intemperate. This phase of education is principally to ensure that growth and development of the child can proceed unhindered. The activities children will be exposed to must not be vulgar, tiring and effeminate in nature and the children must not be forced to study or to perform any kind of labour. Rather, she should be kept active through amusement. The children must be allowed to frolic around with a high level of safety measure against injury. During this period, the moral educator should not attempt to instruct the child. This does not however mean that the educator (or parent) will be inactive in this phase of development. At this phase the child's development can be influenced in a number of ways and the educator/parent has to ensure that the child is influenced in a positive way. Given children's natural tendency to emulate/imitate and their corresponding inability to discriminate good from bad, children will be particularly susceptible to forming bad habits at this age. Hence, the onus is on educators to be vigilant in keeping them away from bad examples.<sup>28</sup>

One way by which the moral educator can influence a child's development at this age is the natural desire to attain pleasure and to avoid pain. And since the child's earliest inclination is toward physical pleasure, the moral educator's task will be in large part to bring the child to take pleasure from the proper sources; he may also capitalize on the child's enjoyment of certain activities to impart ethical lessons. The educator/teacher is to avail herself of rich Nigerian traditional music, poetry and fables, games and other amusements that can engage the attention of the children but with ethical content. For example, Segun Olanibi avers that folktales are important medium of moral education in traditional Yoruba society and this is still very potent tool today. According to him, animal and human characters mingle together in Yoruba folktales. Animals are also made to speak, dress, and act like human beings which is borne out of the need to suitably present didactic stories to children.<sup>29</sup> In the same vein, J.O. Fasoro argues that It was through the combination of myths, proverbs, songs, adages, and the rest, that traditional Yoruba strove to inculcate, moral values to their children.<sup>30</sup> This line of thought is found in Aristotle's treatment of

pleasure that pleasure increases activity. For this reason, Aristotle warns educators to be careful about the kinds of speech and stories their children/pupils may hear.<sup>31</sup> He suggests that they should hear about those things which they will later pursue in earnest since the pleasure they take in them will begin to accustom them to these activities. This admonition tallies with Fasoro in his treatment of Yoruba folklores where he insists that when a Yoruba elderly person called his children and grandchildren together every evening (these children were sometimes joined by others from the neighbourhood) to tell them some stories about certain events which were believed to have taken place in the remote past, he was not trying to merely amuse the children. Usually, the story tellers always drew some moral lessons.<sup>32</sup>

The same inclinations which require such vigilance from parents may also be used as a positive force in a child's pre-education. Because children naturally imitate those around them, particularly their parents, they will naturally begin to attempt to perform the same kinds of acts those around them do. Their tendency to obey the instructions of their parents also gives parents control over their children's actions. By providing good examples, parents may encourage good activity in their children. The child's repeated activities, which mimic those of his parents/teachers, will be the seeds of habits. The Parents and teacher are to be conscious about what kinds of activities and influences they will expose the children to in order to ensure good behaviour. The parents/moral educator in addition to the explicit behavioural example sets for the children, also implicitly promotes certain positive values and types of judgments. As the child begins to emulate her parent's actions, this will likely lead him to seek explanations and justifications for why a given act is performed in a certain set of circumstances. This desire, combined with a child's natural desire to understand makes him particularly receptive to explanations. Thus, a parent is able to begin to teach a child about what is relevant in determining actions, what kinds of exceptions there are, what emotions it is appropriate to feel and so forth. In the words of Nancy Sherman, "the parent helps the child compose the scene in the right way."<sup>33</sup> Cecilia Omobola observes that most parents focus their minds entirely on the academic education of their children and attach less importance to moral education. According to her, education should not aim at academic aspects alone. Academic achievement does not make someone a real human being. The point is that parents should consciously engage in moral activities so as to serve as moral exemplar to children.<sup>34</sup>

The parent/moral educator will contribute significantly in shaping the cognitive basis for emotions by way of the explanations he or she offers. If a parent for example, explains that it is not right to be angry when another child has a turn playing a game, his or her child

will begin to learn that anger is appropriate only when one has been intentionally slighted and that giving another a turn is not such an occasion. The parents/educators must also ensure that they also do not get angry unnecessarily. The parents must consciously react appropriately such that the right emotions of love, anger are exhibited. Although the child will understand these lessons at a very rudimentary level, he will absorb the important fact that emotions are not always right and that their correctness depends on circumstances. The informal education of early childhood begins to orient the child in such a way that he will be receptive to more formal education later. The child will begin to form attachments to good action because of the influence of pleasure in his play and because of his imitation of the good acts of the adults around him.

Mary Page argues that play is the highest phase of child-development. According to her, it is

.... a self active representation of the inner-representation of the inner from inner necessity and impulse. Play is the purest activity of this age . . . . and typical of human life as a whole. It gives joy, freedom, inner and outer rest. It holds the source of all that is good. A child that plays thoroughly, until physical fatigue forbids, will surely be a thorough, determined man, capable of self-sacrifice. Play is not trivial, it is highly serious, and of deep significance. The plays of childhood are germinal leaves of later life, for the whole man is shown in these tendencies. If the child is injured, if the germinal leaves of the future tree of life are marred, he will only with the greatest difficulty escape the stunting effect of the injury it entails.<sup>35</sup>

The import of the above is to corroborate Aristotle's premium on play as significant to moral development. Such play must occur in a safe environment so as to prevent injury. The repetition of these acts helps him become accustomed to acting well and the pleasure associated with them (both from amusement and consequent on the act) helps him begin to take pleasure from the proper sources. The parent or educator concentrates on making sure the child does not develop bad habits and building the foundation for good ones. For example, the parents/educator will consistently tell the truth and require the child to do same in a very cordial environment. Music and folktales giving credence to good habits should be used to reinforce this habituation process. Even at this early stage, the child's affective response is being oriented toward the standard set by reason.

As Aristotle firmly believed that the cultivation of character from early childhood must include the cultivation of emotions, thus allowing us to praise or blame emotional



states. Emotions come to us as we act, but we experience different emotions and at different levels of intensity as we grow up and acquire experience in our interactions with others. This emotional change can be guided. In Aristotle's eyes, the guidance of this change is the first stage of moral education.

### **5.3.3 Basic Education**

As already highlighted above there are two things which an individual has to get correct in order to act virtuously: actions and emotions. This requires excellence in both character and reasoning. Therefore, the moral educator is concerned at this stage with ensuring that his student is habituated so as to perform correct actions and to feel proper emotions. Since Aristotle views education as a developmental process, the changes in the first stage of formal education (early education) will build upon those achieved in the period of pre-education. Thus, if the child has begun to be habituated to feel the right emotions and to perform the right actions in the pre-education phase, this process continues in early education. The influences enumerated in that earlier period will continue to have impact during this one and others will be added. During this period, the habituation of the non-rational part of the soul is the educator's primary goal, although intellectual development takes place as well<sup>36</sup>. During this stage, the teacher influences the child's actions and emotions by explicitly guiding his actions and through gymnastics and music. These influences play two important roles in moral education: they help to properly habituate the non-rational part of the child and help the child to learn about what virtuous activity consists in. The gymnastics or physical exercise is relevant to build the body during this phase of moral education. This becomes important because Aristotle insists that the body must be trained before the mind and that children should begin physical training at this age. The physical training is needed to promote courage. However the physical training should not be excessive so as to prevent any impairment to the growth of the body. Gymnastic training is intended to give individuals the strength and confidence to exhibit bravery when necessary. This physical training allows for the development of other excellence because there is more to even bravery than just physical strength and courage. For example, moral development requires certain discriminatory powers which are not attained through physical training. By implication, physical training should be limited and not excessive. One important element in this phase of education is the repetitiveness of certain character traits. For example, Aristotle makes this most explicit where he says, "...character, being as its name indicates something that grows by habit - and that which is under guidance other than

innate is trained to a habit by frequent movement of a particular kind ..."<sup>37</sup> This guidance will be provided by the moral educator. One of the ways the instructor's guidance teaches the child is through the actions it makes the child perform. This influence takes the form of repetition of acts. The Socratic craft analogy likens the exercise of excellence to a craft. Aristotle extends this analogy to cover training as well. He says in *Nicomachean Ethics* that:

... excellences we get by first exercising them, as also happens in the case of the arts as well. For the things we have to learn before we can do, we learn by doing, e.g. men become builders by building and lyre players by playing the lyre; so too we become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts<sup>38</sup>

What is relevant to us in the above excerpt is that people, including children acquire the excellences in a similar way to that in which they acquire various skills - by doing good acts over and over again. This set of action is similar to those the morally excellent person would perform, like exercising moderation in eating, honesty and similar virtuous actions. Repetition of actions of the same type is supposed to lead to excellence in performing them. The praise and blame offered by the educator will exert direct influence on those actions the student performs. As the instructor praises a student, he will be more likely to perform actions of a similar type. From this repetition the child will learn how to perform excellent action. What remains implicit in Aristotle's notion of becoming excellent by performing excellent activities is a level of guidance, an increasing level of competence, commitment to improvement, critical evaluation and so forth. Students are to rely on the guidance of their instructors, who not only guide their actions, but also help them to analyse and evaluate them. The educator does not provide the student with a set of rules or a detailed description of what excellent action consists in which the student then practices. Educators must consistently apply these features of the idea of becoming excellent through excellent activity as an instrument of moral education.

Pupils are not meant to follow a codifiable rule in the case of both excellence and other skills, however, the educator assists, particularly in this early stage of moral education, to point the child toward particular actions as being correct, and she provides general explanations of why they are correct and offer advice about how to perform them. These explanations will frequently be difficult to verbalize - they may pick out features of the situation or of the participants or they may describe the action in a new light. Quite often (since we rarely encounter the same situation twice) they will take the form of

analogies, highlighting some facet of an action as being the decisive factor in determining what to do. So, the moral educator might remind the child of a previously encountered situation and show him how the present situation is similar to it in such a way that the same type of action must again be performed. By providing this kind of instruction, the moral educator will be able to help the child to learn virtuous acts by doing. Thus, one way in which agents become excellent by doing excellent acts is by acquiring a certain amount of experience and know-how (*technai*). As they perform the same type of action repeatedly, students become more adept and proficient at it, provided the pupils have some guidance and put some effort into it.

Similarly, what Sherman calls "critical practice"<sup>39</sup> will increase the expertise of the student of ethics in determining what actions to perform. There is a way in which this process requires, and causes, cognitive development, which furthers the child's moral development by enabling him to determine more accurately which actions to perform. The student's natural inclination to generalize from experience will ensure that as he repeats similar actions, he will learn from his experience and become more capable of judging which action to perform in similar circumstances. He will begin to recognize for himself the relevant features of a situation. Since Aristotle says that excellence comes about through habit, which is formed by repetition of actions, this repetition must not only enable a person to judge correctly which acts are required, it must also account for how he comes to perform them reliably. That is, it must account for the development and refinement of the affective part of the soul (a person's emotions and desires). This is accomplished in a variety of ways throughout the entire educational process. One way in which habituation affects a person's desires has already been mentioned: as actions, like helping those in need cross the street, become habitual, they yield a certain amount of pleasure.<sup>40</sup> Since humans naturally seek pleasure, this serves as a *prima facie* reason to continue to perform those actions. The response of the educator also helps to shape the affections. Insofar as the student abstracts generalizations from the moral educator's responses, these generalizations influence the cognitive component of emotions. The circumstances which are considered to be the proper basis of various emotions are shaped by generalizations founded on the moral educator's response. As the student learns more about the proper emotional response, his emotions are refined and become more appropriate to the situation.

Another part of the educational program that shapes the affective part of the soul is education in music and poetry which commences during this first phase of formal education. Music and musical training remains a cardinal component in moral education. As

already discussed in chapter four, there are numerous clues in the text of *Politics* which indicate that Aristotle believed musical education to begin in the first phase of formal education. Music and poetry remain also significant in Nigerian society. According to Aristotle, music is to be introduced when the student is still young enough (between seven and fourteen). Musical training has a notable effect on the development of character. Aristotle says repeatedly that it has a strong influence on character and that the practice of music can promote the development of the affective part of the soul. At this age, in particular, music influences a person. Because children are still motivated primarily by pleasure, music is an especially effective tool at this point in the educational program: "[the study is suited to the stage of youth, for young persons will not, if they can help, endure anything which is not sweetened by pleasure, and music has a natural sweetness]"<sup>41</sup> According to this passage, music is particularly effective because it is pleasant. It thus has the characteristics of pleasant activity discussed in the first part of this chapter: children naturally want to do it more and to become better at it. Pleasure makes them attentive to musical training and the lessons thereof. Fortunately, Nigerian society is rich in music which can be consciously and selectively deployed at this stage

Hence the teacher has to carefully select music whose content has moral message for the enjoyment of the children. Lord Carnes in his discussion on the *Politics*, highlights how Aristotle enumerates a number of ways in which music may affect character through its imitation of emotions and character:

And that they are so affected is proved in many ways, and not least by the power which the songs of Olympus exercise; for beyond question they inspire enthusiasm, and enthusiasm is an emotion of the character of the soul. Besides, when men hear imitations, even apart from the rhythms and tunes themselves, their feelings move in sympathy...Rhythm and melody supply imitations of anger and gentleness, and also of courage and temperance, and of all the qualities contrary to these, and of the other qualities of character, which hardly fall short of the actual affections, as we know from our own experience, for in listening to such strains our souls undergo a change.<sup>42</sup>

From the above, music is such a potent tool which helps attune the child to appropriate emotions. For example, in contemporary Nigerian society, many of the music produced excites emotions of sexual laxities among the youth and that may probably account for sexual immoralities in all its forms in our schools. Through music children experience various emotions and these emotions are developed by exposure to the imitations of music and because of the effect music has on the soul. This is why Aristotle

says that only certain modes of music have a beneficial effect in the education of children. Aristotle identifies the Dorian mode as expressive of character, where this must mean good character<sup>43</sup> The Dorian mode is a mean between others and produces a moderate and settled temper. By implication, we can adopt music and poetry similar to the Dorian type. Infact, there are several kinds of music relevant to particular moral value to be taught. Music is used in folktales told to children during the moonlight. This music as mentioned was to teach values of honesty, probity, courage. The songs are laden with relevant emotions that pass the requisite moral messages.

It is presumed that the student will become like what he enjoys. Ethical quality of music will bring a student to experience the emotions for himself and that the pleasure derived from the music will both reinforce these lessons and make him receptive to future lessons, thus allowing habituation to occur through repetition of similar kinds (modes) of music. In bringing the student to experience emotion, good music brings him to feel certain emotions in response to the correct triggers. In addition to making students delight in the right things, musical training aids in the development of good judgment, which also enhances their behaviour. In other words, music enhances ability to judge correctly things that are truly pleasant and painful (or loving and hating correctly). This, then, is another way in which music affects the development of the affective part of the soul: it facilitates the student in forming attachments to the proper objects. A child's enjoyment of music influences his assessment of its subject matter. Thus, by portraying noble subjects music may help to cultivate an attachment to them which is expressed in correct judgments about their value.

Another dimension to music in moral education programme is that students are not only going to enjoy listening to music but also perform (although not at a professional level). In Aristotle's opinion children must learn to perform because in this way they will be better able to judge the work of others. The ability to perform and the work that goes into developing that ability teach students to appreciate and delight in what is fine. As with any skill, those who actually exercise it are able to appreciate the performance of others in a way that the untrained cannot, no matter how educated they are in the area. Whereas, performers know what really is difficult and what only seems difficult to observers. Performers can thus judge more accurately than others what is of merit in a performance. The gist of this idea by Aristotle is that doing a thing teaches a student about it in a way that observation, however keen, cannot. This parallels his views on becoming excellent by doing excellent acts. In both cases, the student's development is promoted by activity. With

musical training the pupil develops the ability to judge as well as his affective responses. In addition to enhancing the ability to judge the performance of others, Aristotle says that actual practice of the art makes a considerable difference in the character of the performer.<sup>44</sup> Performing makes an individual feel the music in a deeper way than the audience does because he is actually producing the imitation of character or emotion. As a child learns, he performs the same pieces repeatedly, thus experiencing the same feelings numerous times. This repetition assists in the cultivation of the sentiments and in associating them with their proper objects and thus brings the child to delight in noble things. Sherman describes the effect of musical training in the following way:

... the learner's mimetic enactment of them [the modes] (through performance) is a way of coming to feel from the inside the relevant qualities of character and emotion. It is an emulative and empathetic kind of identification. Together with the positive reinforcement that comes from pleasure music naturally gives. The mimetic enactment will constitute habituation.<sup>45</sup>

Music, then, is a valuable tool for the moral educator because of its ethical character and the pleasure associated with it. The effort and practice required to learn to perform music impart important lessons applicable to many areas of life. The child learns to refine his actions with practice and that practice does, indeed, pay off. These musical lessons will be important later in the child's moral training, as he begins to reflect on his own actions and tries to act excellently. By training his pupil in music, the educator is able to refine the pupil's judgments about action, to shape the affective part of the soul and to help the pupil to experience the proper sentiments. In this first stage of formal moral education we see both cognitive and affective development, as we should expect given Aristotle's conceptions of moral excellence and development. The student begins to be habituated to performing correct actions and feeling correct emotions through gymnastics, directed activity and musical training. As he becomes habituated in a certain way, it becomes natural insofar as it happens with regularity and begins to yield its own pleasure.<sup>46</sup> The pleasure he takes in noble activity, in turn, strengthens his attachment to it. At this point, the child has begun to acquire the proper ends and affections through habituation, but the habituation process is by no means complete. Although the child has some attachment to fine action and experiences pleasure upon performing it, he still has strong competing desires which often control his actions: his habits are not yet well entrenched and his desires are not unified. He has not yet made the transition to self-directed action -his actions still will be externally guided. Although he may be able to identify excellent actions and what makes them excellent in

some cases, he has not yet become capable of adult moral reasoning which yields practical wisdom.

### **5.3.4 Secondary Education Curriculum**

The next stage in formal education, which lasts from fourteen to twenty-one, will build on the achievements of the previous ones. The habituation process which begun in pre and early education will continue in late education and several new instruments of education will be introduced in addition. The primary difference between adolescence and the earlier stages in the educational program is the increasing emergence of reason, self-determined action and self-assessment. In this stage of education, the educator is still primarily concerned with habituation of the non-rational part of the soul, but he is working with a more complicated, sophisticated student and therefore has more resources at his disposal. Aristotle characterizes youth as a time when an individual experiences strong desires and is often led by them.<sup>47</sup> These desires tend to be variable though - they arise quickly and strongly, but subside just as quickly. Youths are particularly prone to acting not only on strong desires, but also from anger. This is because of their desire for honour. Youths at this age have become committed to society in a way that they were not when they were younger; this suggests that social norms and expectations will have a greater influence on their actions during this period of their education than previously. Because they lack experience in life, youths are optimistic and confident and therefore tend toward excess. At this age, young men tend to live according to their characters rather than according to reason. Aristotle explains that character and excellence lead a person to choose noble actions, as opposed to reasoning, which selects what is useful. Since youths live and act according to their characters, they will tend to select those actions they believe to be noble.

The youth Aristotle describes is a typical modern day teenager. These youths experience emotions deeply, care about what others think of them and act from their feelings rather than from deliberation. Because they lack experience, particularly of negative things, the students will be overly trusting and over-confident of their own abilities. They will not know what is realistic in a situation. At this stage the young people are also particularly attached to, and influenced by, their friends. Given these traits of the youths, the moral educator should tailor the education program to accommodate the characteristics of youth. As mentioned above, many of the methods of instruction used in earlier periods continue to be used in late education. Presumably, the teacher offers explicit guidance to the youth with respect to the activities he performs through proverbs and music,

although this will take a broader range of forms than during the first phase of education. In this regard, musical training remains one of the training that will continue beyond early education into late education. As the youths come to delight in music properly beyond middle childhood, we can expect musical training to have the same kinds of effects during this period.

Similarly, the tendency toward imitation will continue during this period of development. However, the object of imitation as mentioned above is likely to change. The young youth is most likely to be inclined to imitate his/her friends rather than her parents. This invariably has greater influence on his/her behaviour. This influence, depending on their character, can either reinforce earlier lessons about what is fine or get the student off track. The moral educator needs to oversee the young man's friends as much as possible. It is unlikely that the educator will be able to shape the interactions that constitute a friendship; he therefore needs to attempt to ensure that his pupil's friends are also moving toward proper habituation. The teacher's efforts must also be directed to guide friends in worthwhile activities that they love doing together. If he is able to do this, then the student's friendships have a positive effect on his development. Friends will reinforce each other's good behaviour and criticize each other when they act badly. Another area where external influences can shape a young man's development is his pursuit of honour and his effort to avoid shame. In the traditional Yoruba society for example, one way of promoting moral probity among the youth is to expose young children who is hard in taking corrections to mild public ridicule. Most often, the youth in order to avoid the attendant shame desist from whatever acts considered wrong. However, in his effort to obtain honour or to avoid shame, a young person will try to conform to social expectations. At this stage, a shift in priorities has occurred as social convention becomes more influential than parental expectation in determining the young man's actions. The desires for honour and to avoid shame serve as a strong source of motivation in the young student; the moral educator should take advantage of this by orienting the students toward what is truly honourable and away from what is shameful. He may do this with the application of praise and blame, as well as with explanations. This in turn brings the student to perform the best acts, which we have seen has a positive effect on his development. As he repeats these actions, he becomes habituated to them and is able to draw on them in his moral reasoning. Being oriented toward what is truly honourable leads the young man to properly assess actions and people.

The educator is also required to bring his student to seek honour from the right people (those who know what is truly valuable) and not people who use dishonest means to



attain position of fame. In this way, the educator will be able to inspire his pupil to perform good acts which will habituate him to good action, and to become attached to the right things and to accurately assess what they are. A young man's awareness of social norms and conventions also indicates that he will probably be aware of and influenced by the laws of his society. This awareness is likely to have an influence on his actions which is caused by the desire for honour. Since according to Aristotle a young person wants to be regarded as a good member of society (insofar as he wishes to be honoured), he will do his best to live by its standards, as reflected in its laws. Laws are no longer threat or direct constraint on properly habituated person. Laws only become a constraint to adults who was not properly habituated. As intimated by Aristotle, laws serve as a directional element on behaviour of someone who strives to be a good member of his community. Laws should be used not only because they reflect an accurate assessment of situations and people and thereby reduce the chances of bad examples for young people, but also because they provide a minimum standard for a person's actions. By guiding actions, laws can exert a positive influence on a young person's development and help him to act according to reason rather than passion when these conflict.

There is another component in the educational program that we extracted from Aristotle's work. This was not explicitly mentioned to contribute to moral education as highlighted in chapter four, but which has effects on character and therefore seems to contribute to moral education. According to Aristotle in *Poetics*, men learn through the imitation of poetry which includes tragedy. Since Aristotle does not discuss tragedy in the context of education, as he does music, we are left to extrapolate his views from his discussion of the topic in the *Poetics* and from what we have learned thus far about his views on education. As I have mentioned in chapter four, I include the discussion of tragedy because it would be particularly effective at this time. Tragedy is said to affect a person largely through the emotions, especially pity and fear. Since Aristotle believes youths feel emotion strongly and are heavily influenced by it, it seems reasonable to conjecture that he would have recognized the effectiveness of tragedy as a means for affecting young students. However, appreciation of tragedy (as well as the emotions of pity and fear) also requires experience. Students' identification with the characters and their fate in the poems can have tremendous effect on their own character. Tragedy by its nature requires a certain amount of empathy, which in turn requires accepting that bad things can happen to one. As young people have not yet had enough experience in the world to realize how fragile happiness is and how quickly bad things can befall them. Tragedy becomes important because tragedy

requires both passion and a certain degree of experience which is majorly exhibited by the young ones at this period. We may safely say that Aristotle thought it might play a role in a young person's moral development only once he had gained a fair amount of experience and had become able to feel empathetic emotions -probably in the latter half of late childhood and into adulthood.

Aristotle's description of tragedy brings out some important elements in relevant to helping the young pupils attain good character as he offers the following definition of tragedy:

A tragedy, then, is the imitation of an action that is serious and also, as having magnitude, complete in itself: in language with pleasurable accessories, each kind brought in separately in the parts of the work; in a dramatic, not in a narrative form; with incidents which arouse pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish its catharsis of such emotions."<sup>48</sup>

The content of tragic poems should be able to arouse in the students both pity and fear in their memories. The plot of the poems must also be believable and must be about incidents which arouse pity and fear. The plot should contain three parts: reversal of fortune, discovery and suffering. Its central character must be neither too good nor too bad: he must be one of "...the intermediate kind of personage, a man not pre-eminently virtuous and just, whose misfortune, however, is brought upon him not by vice and depravity but by some fault ..."<sup>49</sup> In order to generate tragic pleasure, Aristotle says, the poet must produce pity and fear by a work of imitation; therefore, the causes of events which arouse pity and fear should be included in the story. Fear is an emotion which is felt in anticipation of events which a person feels has the power to destroy him. A person comes to fear things that he believes may legitimately happen to him which is not in the distant future. One way to incite fear in an audience, Aristotle informs the orator, is to make them believe that some danger befell people like themselves. Although this advice is intended for an orator, it seems just as applicable to a tragic poet because presumably both are dealing with audiences with similar emotional responses. We see in Aristotle's description of the tragic hero and plot an effort to make sure that the events are believable and to ensure that the audience will identify with the situation.

Pity is defined in the *Rhetoric* as "...a feeling of pain at an apparent evil, destructive or painful, which befalls one who does not deserve it, and which we might expect to befall ourselves or some friend of ours, and moreover to befall us soon"<sup>50</sup> Thus, pity is partly anticipatory and partly reactive. Like fear, it requires that an agent identify with the person

who suffers. However, the requirement of identification seems to be less stringent in the case of pity. Aristotle notes that a person feels pity not only when he feels a similar thing may happen to him, but also when he feels that it might happen to someone he cares about. Thus, a young man might feel pity in reaction to a situation he imagines might happen to his father. The experience of these emotions may also lead to a feeling of vulnerability with respect to the events of life. In these respects, in particular, the occurrent emotion of pity serves to remind an individual of the importance of his *filial* relations - imagining or recognizing the evils that might befall those he cares about reinforces the young man's sense of connection to them and empathy for them.

Tragedy contributes to moral education in two ways: as a way of learning about human action (intellectually) and as a way of developing and refining the experience of emotions (emotionally). The first is rather straightforward. Humans learn first through imitation and naturally enjoy imitation. The events in the play promote the development of his practical reasoning. As he views these events he will gain knowledge about what constitutes a proper response to such situations. Aristotle states that imitation causes people to learn and that it thereby causes delight. Pleasure is associated with imitation as a result of its role in promoting learning and understanding. And it is also natural for human beings to delight in works of imitation. The truth of this is shown by experience: though the objects of imitation may be painful to see, we delight to view the most realistic representations of them in art, the forms, for example, of the lowest animals and of dead bodies. The explanation of this is to be found in a further fact: to learn something is the greatest of pleasures not only to the philosopher but also to the rest of mankind, however small their capacity for it; the reason of the delight in seeing the picture is that one is at the same time learning. Hence, tragedy provides examples from which the student can learn. He will encounter different types of individuals and have an opportunity to observe what they say and do.

### **5.3.5 Tertiary/Adult Education**

At this stage the student has learned to feel emotion in more or less the right way; his emotions may be regarded as being in conformity with reason. The student has developed a rich and discerning set of emotions which helps him to respond appropriately to different situations. He has also begun to form an inductive base from which to reason for himself about what action to perform in a given situation. Also, he has begun to engage in self-reflection about his acts and to identify with reason as a standard for action. This transition toward self-assessment reflects the student's own emerging commitment to

excellence. Nevertheless, the student still needs exposure to additional situations to perfect his moral reasoning. The student at this stage needs the acquisition of *phronesis* (*practical wisdom*) and harmonization of the rational and non-rational parts of the soul. This requires the development of a view of the end which underlies his choices. Once his ability to reason is perfected and he has a settled view of the end, the student will achieve *phronesis*. The acquisition of *phronesis* requires intellectual training and some view about the good life which is not provided by habituation and continued training. Moreover, continued habituation does not account for the unification of thought and desire and the stability of character required for full moral excellence.

How, exactly, does reflective reason take hold of a person's motivational patterns, transforming them from mere habitual behaviour into action grounded in prudence? The whole of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Burnyeat explains, is a response to this question. In Burnyeat's view, Aristotle intends the *Ethics* to be "a course in practical thinking that enables someone who already wants to be virtuous to understand better what he should do and why."<sup>51</sup> Reflection alone, Aristotle insists, cannot promote ethical conduct. This is so because, as Aristotle mentions time and again, reflection can only teach what goodness is, but not how to become good since the purpose of moral education is the latter, "we must apply our minds to the problem of how our actions should be performed, because, as we have just said, it is these that actually determine our dispositions."<sup>52</sup> Long before the capacity for deliberation develops, the tendency to embrace virtue must already have taken hold. The ground from which this inclination springs is seeded very early, during the first two stages of the child's education.

As noted above, practical wisdom according to Aristotle is an important element because its exercise confirms its moral significance. In practical wisdom emotions supplement rationality. According to Collier, practical wisdom includes moral imagination. Moral imagination helps us to grasp the moral quality of an act when we are engaged in moral deliberation. Therefore, moral imagination is needed when we make moral decisions and faces ethical challenges that arise in our interactions. Collier explains that the presence of imagination in moral judgments 'is associated with the move to the pragmatism in epistemology and with the shift to classical Aristotelianism in ethics'<sup>53</sup>. In line with these perspectives, many scholars like Kekes, Alexander, and Larmore through different analyses, point out that imagination plays a pivotal role in moral deliberation. It helps us to become aware of the context and personal circumstances of our decisions; to create images of the future to illuminate that present;

and to develop a critical self-reflection regarding our possibilities as moral agents. We devise ways in which we understand situations and might move forward using our moral imagination as well as our reason. The recognition of imagination in moral deliberation activates affective as well as rational responses by the subject during ethical reflection. Prudence and practical wisdom are the concepts used by Aristotle to create a bridge between the emotive and the rational. As Aristotle indicates, both aspects are inseparable in moral and practical affairs, because to have practical intelligence implies being good. Leaving aside its rational aspect, practical wisdom has a fundamental intuitive component that has often been minimized. The double facet of practical wisdom, rational-emotional or reason imagination, articulates knowledge with values and emotions, and thus prudence acts as knowledge with emotional support. Aristotle recognizes that sometimes some emotions have cognitive weight.

Therefore, the relevance of prudence lies in its double face: it is the highest intellectual virtue; but, at the same time, it is the condition of possibility of moral virtues, because it is intelligence informed by virtues that puts into practice the values that moral virtues provide. In Book VI of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle highlights the intellectual facet that prudence entails. As Aristotle indicates, prudence is a rational disposition, a reflective act of practical deliberation; thus the prudent man is one who is able to perform good deliberation and, consequently, he concludes, it is not possible to have good deliberation without reasoning. The evaluation process carried out by judgment and illuminated by prudence manifests its rational facet. This analysis led Aristotle to establish prudence as the highest intellectual virtue, and it has subsequently been the aspect of practical reason necessary to attaining moral virtues.

However, prudential deliberation is not a calculation or an automatic application of generalizable knowledge, because, as Aristotle explains, it is not an act of science or technique. The strict application of rule-based morality implies a consideration of a human being only as a creature of reason, ignoring that it is also a creature of feeling. The exercise of practical wisdom and moral deliberation requires the presence of moral imagination. Aristotle says that understanding involves imagination, a faculty that acts when you grasp the moral quality of an act and which thus makes you responsible for understanding the act correctly.<sup>54</sup> But, at the same time, moral imagination involves intelligence and rationality.

On this basis, the exercise of prudence involves 'knowing' and 'sensing' what one should do in certain situations. Rational and emotional elements come into play jointly in

moral deliberation, which will culminate in a decision being made. Consequently, the final decision will be the result of the interaction of emotion and reason, produced during the exercise of practical wisdom. In this sense, Aristotle argues that choice is deliberated desire. The relevance of this perspective is that it is not dualistic and that it could lead to a position in which neither reason nor emotion are privileged as sources of moral action. This appraisal of practical wisdom does not eliminate the importance of rationality, but, by opening up its emotional component.

In the remaining part of the chapter, I will reflect upon the pedagogical implications of moral education for achieving practical wisdom in the classrooms. I explore how practical wisdom could be taught to students, tomorrow's leaders and citizens. There are many pragmatic difficulties in introducing practical wisdom into school moral education programs. A similar and frequently debated question is whether ethics can, in fact, be taught. Currently, there are two main stances on how to teach ethics or moral education in school: an integrated model, in which ethics is fully integrated into different subjects, and a model that defends the configuration of ethics in an isolated module.<sup>55</sup> The integrated approach begins with a review of the existing ethos, relationships, activities, programmes, syllabi, content across different stages and concerns of school. This will help analyse how and where values already fit in and where there are obvious value conflicts in schools and where these would be better integrated. Teams are created to review the whole realm of curriculum activities that exists in schools. This team would review and workout strategies to reorient the existing curricular activities with deliberate focus on concerned values.<sup>56</sup> Similarly a team of subject teachers, for example, Science, Social Sciences, Languages, Mathematics get together to decide the values to be integrated into the teaching of textual material in different subject areas. They identify themes and related values, develop exemplar questions and exercises to use with students with deliberate attempts to engage them to understand, appreciate and reflect on values embedded in the contents. Each teacher develops a lesson idea to share with their fellow colleagues. The Principal provides support to the teachers to develop and compile such lesson ideas for transaction in classroom. In-house workshops are organized during vacation period.

Whereas, some advocates like Haensly, P., Howard-Hamilton M.F. and Roeper A. argue that moral education is best promoted through a subject-based approach. In this approach, curriculum is designed to cover four key stages in primary and secondary schools and it is designed for some period of year in the curriculum. By adopting a spiral

learning approach, it facilitates students to learn progressively across different key stages so as to enhance their mastery of the depth and breadth of the curriculum. This approach is believed to assist provides a continuous, daily-life and close-knit curriculum to ensure that students have a complete and systematic learning experience; caters for students' developmental characteristics and needs at different stages; connecting various subjects and related learning experiences/activities to facilitate the learning and teaching of moral education holistically; and finally facilitates a more systematic and holistic planning and review of the implementation of moral education, including curriculum planning, learning and teaching strategies, assessment, etc.<sup>57</sup> Accepting that both of them have strengths and weaknesses. I will subscribe to a synthesis of the two approaches. Hence, Practical wisdom is a faculty that enhances and completes the habituation process. It will thus be necessary to think about how this knowledge could be taught -knowing, that its exercise is connected to an individual's experience. I suggest that we need to provide students with specific exercises for resolving ethical issues using their wisdom in relevant life domains. The practical wisdom model attempts to raise ethical awareness and provide students with ethical and cognitive decision-making skills through the different moral issues. This practical wisdom approach is based on the fact that the double nature of practical wisdom coincides with the dual objective of education. As I indicated, practical wisdom has a rational and emotional weight that comes from the consideration of human beings as creatures of reason and feeling as well. Thus, the exercise of practical wisdom articulates knowledge with values and emotions. And it is precisely in this two-fold trait that practical wisdom matches up with the objectives of moral education. Therefore, practical wisdom seeks to have effects on two different spheres: on the students' awareness and attitudes on one hand, and their reasoning ability on the other. Formerly, I pointed out that one of the aims of moral education will be to stimulate moral imagination, to recognise critical ethical issues, as well as to develop analytical skills. Now, I assert that these objectives correspond to the conventional distinction between education of cognition and education of affect<sup>58</sup> and that they in turn coincide with the double facet of practical wisdom. The education of cognition seeks to expand knowledge and develop perception and understanding in ethical issues. This aspect corresponds to the rational facet of practical wisdom. In addition, the emotional side of practical wisdom is encouraged through the development and recognition of attitudes, emotions and virtues. They configure the student's capability to identify implicit values, to make decisions coherent with their own virtues and experiences, and

to sharpen their moral awareness. The concurrence of cognitive and affective learning outcomes shapes the student's aptitude to critically evaluate what they hear and to question the moral acceptability of their choices and the context in which they are made as well. Most people accept that wisdom is gained through experience and that, therefore, by definition practical wisdom cannot be taught. However, this argument is only partly true because practical wisdom can also be conveyed through narrative.

According to J. Holmes more than models and theories, stories might contain a great deal of practical wisdom.<sup>59</sup> Narratives transmit ideas relevant to time and place and activate the students' moral imagination in a way that uninteresting facts do not. Complex case studies, films, and discussions among students are often employed to show how moral issues take form. Even though there is no practical wisdom in these stories, the exercise of practical wisdom emerges when students are invited to experience the story personally and consider their choices and dilemmas depending on their own virtues, knowledge and experiences. People react differently to a particular state of affairs, because each one possesses his or her own values and perception, and definitely his or her own wisdom. In looking at a case, a story or experience and discerning their salient features (moral, social and technical), we are helping students develop their practical wisdom. By proposing to students stories that sharpen their moral perception, we foster their grasp of the moral characteristics of a situation, and they thus become morally responsible for their decisions and acts. This decisional and moral exercise should be coherent with the specific students' virtues; therefore complex case studies, for instance, should help them think critically about their own values. Students will be better equipped to choose coherent courses of action that will support their values and virtues. To achieve practical wisdom teachers have to take a broad and flexible view of the topics they include in the moral education programmes. Regardless of the different topics integrated into the programme, students may become aware of the complexity and ambiguity of real life situations, the important role that the particular plays therein, and the moral content of these situations. These simulations compel students to confront situations affected by different variables - e.g. technical, environmental, social, and moral-and to exercise their capacity of interpretation and judgment. It invites students to make sense of their own experiences. The exercise of judgment becomes a source of learning, a vital process by which one shapes oneself morally by taking a stance on the



particular and ambiguous as the students are forced to make personal decisions and assume their own responsibility.

During the course of the class, and beforehand during class preparation, students have to sense that they are, with their own judgment and interpretation, the ones who are analyzing the situation, making the decisions, and undergoing the personal internal conflict that the decision-making process entails. It must be noted that the prudential exercise entails a conflictual process whereby individual critically matches personal experience with community or social perspective on the issue under consideration in an attempt to choose the right action. Though this subsides as the individual continuously chooses the right action and act rightly. Lastly, developing practical wisdom entails the reshaping of the teacher figure and its role within classroom. From this perspective, the teacher's sensitivity and stance cannot be privileged. To a certain extent, the figure of the teacher is weakened and the teacher's perception does not prevail over the others because the teacher is no longer 'an all-knowing source of information.'<sup>60</sup> but a conductor of students' reflections. During the process of discussion, the teacher acts apparently in silence, suggesting or commenting on possible pitfalls in pupils line of thought, and alerting students to aspects or consequences that the students are not considering in their ethical discussions. The purpose should be to illustrate the complexity of the process of ethical decision-making, providing a practical approach. Through the teacher's comments, students should be able to sense the moral dimension and implications arising from their considerations of issues and assume the responsibility that those decisions entail. Apart from the above, tragedy also helps evoke catharsis (strong emotional experiences that ultimately result in a sense of purification) in drama. This is a tool that helps in arousing emotion and reason with the sole aim of attaining practical wisdom. According to Aristotle as cited by Boal,

This system (of tragedy) functions to placate, satisfy, eliminate all that can break the balance—all, including the revolutionary transforming impetus...it is designed to bridle the individual, to adjust him to what pre-exists.<sup>61</sup>

To Nussbaum, the insights we acquire through cathartic clarification are equivalent to the acquisition of emotional knowledge. They are:

...sources of illumination or clarification, as the agent, responding or attending to his or her responses, develops a richer

self-understanding concerning the attachments and values that support the responses.<sup>62</sup>

Catharsis as interpreted by Nussbaum has much more in common with what has for a long time been seen as a mainstream function of drama teaching; it stresses the cognitive aspect of emotion and suggests that drama's educational potential centres around its capacity for illumination, thus calling to mind Dorothy Heathcote's famous maxim that drama is about revealing to children what they already know but don't yet know they know. This function of drama in education has been succinctly expressed by Robinson, K. thus:

The use of drama in schools to engage the expressive actions of children is one of the ways of enabling them to confirm (their) personal responsibilities by investigating what their beliefs, ideas, attitudes and feelings actually are.<sup>63</sup>

Aristotle specified that, in tragedy, this clarification should be actualized through pity and fear but, following Nussbaum's definition, it is hard to see why other emotions should not have such potential in a broader schema of educational drama; anger, indignation, repulsion, admiration, sympathy, and communal well-being; all might be harnessed for educational purposes, to clarify our understandings of the virtues as *thick concepts* and thus inform our moral values. Nussbaum's conclusions would doubtless be criticized by some feminists for assuming the existence of an essentialist self and for ignoring the issue of the power and the hegemony of moral discourse.

In the final analysis, catharsis itself is non-ideological and amoral. Moral responsibility lies with dramatists and teachers, with those who harness its energy to explore or explain or create particular cathartic experiences in particular dramatic contexts. What matters is the wisdom and appropriateness of what is learned through catharsis. Nussbaum's interpretation of catharsis is not dependent upon the existence or otherwise of universal values or an essentialist self. There can be no one universal clarification or emotional response within a drama, of course; it is patently evident to any teacher or practitioner that a drama has no single effect, predictable or otherwise, upon an audience or a group of children. Responses can depend upon a number of variations within the individuals watching or participating: their personal cultural baggage, their past narratives and future aspirations; the social nature of the group who share the drama; or, as Robinson insists, whichever 'self' happens to be prominent at this moment in time. None of us consists of a unique sense of self... Personal consciousness is a frenzy of

competing self-images which shuffle and blend continuously according to past experiences, immediate events and the subject states they produce.<sup>64</sup> However, to concentrate our educational argument on the self, as critics of drama-in education have tended to do would be rather to miss the point, for the emphasis in drama is never primarily on the self but on the self *in relation to others*. As an audience in drama, we watch other people; as participants, we role play or interact with or act as other people and it is for or as someone else that we feel. The emotions stirred in drama, some of which are listed above, are *other-regarding* and stimulated by our potential for human attachment. This is what Aristotle described as our *orectic* potential, our innate capacity to reach out to others, one of the givens of our social nature, particularly evident in childhood and similarly emphasized by feminist moral theorists<sup>65</sup> such as Carol Gilligan and Nell Noddings. We learn about the moral actions of others and speculate upon why they do as they do; about possibilities and alternatives where we are engaged to draw from our own moral resources but which stretch us and make us reflect precisely because they are not our personal stories but situated in a world of otherness. Clarification of why others might act as they do, and the effect of these actions, is our primary focus of attention. Of course, such clarification is inextricably bound up with our own moral identities, as these actions are viewed and apprehended through the perspective of our own values. But these values, culturally and ideologically shaped though they may be, are, as Robinson emphasizes ‘capable of change’<sup>66</sup>

The nature of moral response to drama has been approached from a different theoretical perspective, one which takes account of ideology but which, unlike the theories of Bertolt Brecht and Augusto Boal, is not driven by ideological commitment. The conceptual framework provided by Bernard Beckerman provides a model to explain how drama can either reinforce or challenge our values. Beckerman argues that there are two types of performance, the *iconic* and the *dialectic*. The iconic performance celebrates and confirms audience values by concentrating and embodying social values and images, its point being to ‘prove’ what the audience already believes. He points to pageants and parades as the most extreme examples of iconic action and describes how, in the field of drama, both comedy and melodrama are essentially iconic as they leave the audience’s values undisturbed. Interestingly, he comments that most political theatre can be categorized as iconic as ‘it does not change people’s minds. Rather does it confirm the opinion of believers.’<sup>67</sup> In contrast to this, Beckerman proposes that dialectic action subjects values to challenge. It works through subversion, by creating an

appealing but oppositional claim on an audience's allegiances, and is thus able to disturb its moral sensibilities through tugging at its emotions in oppositional directions simultaneously and thus forcing it into reflection.

In Jonathan Levy's assessment, catharsis through theatre provides a place to train the faculty of decision making by presenting "hard cases"-nearly equally good but opposite arguments-about an important choice to be made on stage. Also the theatre serves as a stimulus to emulation of the virtuous characters the actors are portraying and the spectators are watching. Lastly, the theatre is an arena for public ridicule of vice and folly.<sup>68</sup>

Hence drama or theatre provides a good avenue to stimulate students' acquisition of practical wisdom and also engaging their emotional responses positively. We shall now move on to reflect on habituation and role modelling as a means of attaining virtue drawing out some implications for moral education programme in our schools.

#### **5.4 How can Virtues be Transmitted in the Schools?**

As already hinted in the previous section, moral education requires certain conscientious steps for its success in schools. Habituating and educating people especially young ones in virtues is both simple and complex task; it is however achievable. Infact, David Carr regards failure on the part of teachers and parents to embark on this as unfortunate. In his comment he argues that just as we should not sensibly delay with respect to instructing a child in scientific or artistic facts, knowledge and procedures until he is old enough to make neutral and independent decisions for himself, so it is absurd to delay a child's moral training in honesty, generosity, fortitude and fairness until he is old enough to choose for himself.<sup>69</sup> The point is that negligence in this onerous educational task is inexcusable. In this wise, we can bifurcate moral education programme into two major segments. The first aspect dealing with how children can be habituated into virtues and values that are conducive to proper socialisation and education without falling prey to the problem of indoctrination. In training a child to be honest, self controlled, fair and considerate of others, for example, it will be absurd to speak of indoctrination because there is no existing alternative dispositions to these into which we might sensibly be said to be initiating children in the name of proper socialisation or education. In this sense, role modelling is a viable pedagogical method to begin the habituation of children. The second issue of moral education deals with the agentic aspect of moral development wherein it becomes absurd

to abdicate the fundamental role of an educator. It matters a great deal whether or not students grow up to be people for whom morality is a central element of their identity, and whether their moral understandings inform them in ways that direct them to attend to the embedded, as well as highly salient, moral features of the social world. Thus, we cannot throw up our hands in dismay at the prospect that we cannot create people of virtue. What we can do instead is contribute to the ways in which children construct their moral understandings, their interpretations of the moral and social world, and the linkages between those understandings and how they self-define themselves. This integrative view of moral education addresses the agentic side of morality without reducing moral education to a series of futile efforts at indoctrination.

Using Aristotle's platform, many Aristotelians have therefore identified and advocated for the role model method as crucial in moral education programme. Scholars like David Carr and Lickona, T. are of the opinion that the teacher is an inevitable role model *qua* teacher. The teacher by engaging in moral mentoring by which young people are inducted into adulthood with the help of a systematic use of moral exemplars (through stories, drama or play, biographies, videos and other teaching materials) in moral education classes –exemplars that are meant to inspire students to emulation. This position is generally shared by other proponents with minor variations. Suffice it to say then that, there is a reasonably wide consensus both outside and inside moral-education circles that the professional role of the teacher cannot be clearly disentangled from the moral qualities of the person who occupies the role of an educator: that at every working moment the teacher is indirectly, through conduct and attitude, conveying a moral message. However, the scholars who advocate direct didactic use of role models in moral education fail to articulate how role modelling is supposed to evoke emulation. This failure further generates some educational problems ranging from empirical, methodological to substantive moral problem.

The first problem is the empirical problem arising from A. Bucher's research findings that children often see their parents and relatives as role model which run contrary to the position of Lickona who argue that young people are in urgent need of role models because today's youths are held in a firm grip by the mass media which depict society in moral decline. Thus drug-snorting pop idols and rumbustious sport stars have allegedly taken over as the leading role models of our age.<sup>70</sup> Again, another part of the empirical problem here has to do with Bucher's discussion of the general importance of role models which has some slippage between the notions of 'having a personal role

model', 'identifying with a role model' and 'letting a role model influence your moral identity'. We can reasonably say that young persons could have role models without being able to identify with them; young persons might even deliberately choose role models with whom they could not presently identify but would like to be able to identify with after making certain efforts at self-change (For example, I cannot fathom the depth of Mother Teresa's compassion, but she is my role model: the person with whom I would like to identify'). Furthermore, there is a great difference between identifying with a person and letting that person influence one's moral identity; the identification process may, for instance, be transient and not penetrate the depths of one's moral selfhood.

The second problem is what we can refer to as methodological problem. Here, we may want to ask what it means to expose students to 'inspiring and effective' role models in an educational context? D. Rose, one of the advocates of role model argues that role-model education 'is not concerned with the imparting of knowledge', but rather with exposing students to individuals embodying certain positive lifestyles and attitudes. Education becomes 'experiential'; when children are faced with worthy role models in the classroom, they will 'latch on to them as their ideals'<sup>71</sup> The idea seems to be that a model is presented for emulation, somehow students are encouraged into finding it attractive such that they latch onto it and emulate it. But one can hardly avoid understanding this to be a description of emulation as mere imitation, which brings us to the issue of the methodological problem: if character educationists do not aim higher than replacing copycat vice with copycat virtue, they are presenting an unsophisticated, undemanding and uncritical –almost infantilizing – model of emulation, essentially devoid of cognitive content. As a refreshing antidote to the copycat notion of role-model education, Nietzsche's essay on Schopenhauer as educator comes to mind. Nietzsche emphatically explains how the true role of a moral exemplar is to waken yourself to your 'higher self' – the higher ideals to which you can aspire, the possibilities that lie dormant within yourself – and that you cannot take someone as your exemplar simply by undertaking to imitate him. Such an undertaking would, in Nietzsche's view, amount to an ethically impotent form of admiration: a strategy for evading a morally motivated, inwardly felt demand for self-transformation. Rather, the exemplar should help students to arrive at an articulate conception of what they value and want to strive towards and help them find realistic means to that end: 'No one can construct for you the bridge upon which precisely you must cross the stream of life, no one but you yourself alone'<sup>72</sup>

The third problem has to do with how the contemporary discussion of role model centres on the emulation or imitation of persons rather than of qualities displayed by persons. This is more than a linguistic aberration or simplification. What seems to be meant, at least by some of the scholars, for example, Rose, is that one could justifiably hold up persons for emulation without being able to explain what it is about them that makes them worthy of such emulation without being able to identify the quality that we want students to acquire, except by pointing to the person and saying, 'It is the quality that this person/hero/leader has'. Students should simply stare at the relevant role model until the unique 'shape' of this quality jumps out at them, and there would be little more to say. The problem with this view is that if role-modelling is not concerned with the 'imparting of knowledge and information'<sup>73</sup>, but merely with learning experientially to imitate a charismatic leader, we risk ending up with blind hero-worship: unenlightened conformity. For how can we learn to discern the imperfections that afflict even the greatest of heroes if we are to conform to them as persons, rather than following, knowledgeably, informatively and critically, the particular virtues that they display?

The crucial moral question is: what precisely are students supposed to learn to emulate in role-model education: a person or an ideal embodied in a person? This question inevitably brings us to the conversation of *Euthyphro* : do the gods love piety because it is pious, or it is pious because they love it? Socrates' answer was, of course, that the gods are subordinated to an objective value that they recognize as lovable – that it is something in the intrinsic nature of piety that makes it worthy of love. The same should hold in role-model education if students are to avoid uncritical conformity: they must learn to value the ideals embodied in role models because those values are essentially valuable, not merely because the values are enacted by the role models. The problem is that this is not explicitly stated in many of the contemporary sources on role-model and that some of them even imply exactly the opposite.

Following Kristjánsson's explication of Aristotle's discussion of emulation as a way of putting the idea of role model in perspective, one finds enriching understanding of pedagogical use of role modelling properly articulated. Emulation which is one of the various emotions, painful and pleasant, listed and discussed by Aristotle in his *Rhetoric* helps in appreciating the idea of role model. This emotion (emulation) is characterized by

a kind of distress at the apparent presence among others like him by nature, of things honoured and possible for a person to acquire not from the fact that another has them but that the emulator does not (thus emulation is a good thing and characteristic of good

people, while envy is bad and characteristic of the bad; for the former [person], through emulation, is making an effort to attain good things for himself, while the latter, through envy, tries to prevent his neighbour from having them) – [if this definition is posited] then necessarily “ those are emulous who think themselves deserving of goods they do not have”<sup>74</sup>

Aristotle draws a sharp conceptual and moral contrast between emulation and envy. But despite this distinction, we find commonplace in contemporary discussions of emulation referred to as a kind of envy – ‘friendly’, ‘emulative’ or ‘admiring envy’ – in situation wherein B would like to attain the same goods as C without wishing that C be deprived of his, and where B views C’s respective superiority with friendly, admiring eyes. This usage may be partly condoned by the fact, that Aristotle proposed too narrow a definition of envy. He equated all envy with what we might helpfully term ‘invidious’ or ‘malicious envy’ – envy in which B wants to deprive C of the envied good without any moral reasons – an emotion that is truly ‘bad and characteristic of the bad’. Aristotle mistakenly overlooked other possible types of envy, such as ‘angry envy’ or ‘indignant envy’, in which B does wish for the same thing as in invidious envy but with (at least *prima facie*) morally good reasons.

Whereas it is conceptually advisable to widen Aristotle’s conception of envy, the description of emulation as a kind of envy is not a suitable one. The specification of emulation violates what seems to be a necessary conceptual condition of envy (albeit one unnoticed by Aristotle) – required in order to serviceably distinguish envy from other related concepts such as begrudging spite: pain at another’s deserved good fortune. This is the condition in which the envier, B, wishes to eliminate the relative advantage that the envied person, C, has over B, by taking the envied thing away from C and transferring it to B. Through emulation, by contrast, we simply express, with admiration, the desirability of being like C in some respect, or having the same thing as C, without wanting to take anything away from C.

Another way to describe the distinction between emulation and envy would be to say that the pain experienced by C in the two emotions is focused differently. In emulation the focus is on B’s own unfavourable position; whereas the pain in envy is focused on C’s favourable position. According to Ben-Ze’ev, begrudging spite would be akin to envy, but the difference would still lie in B’s wish for the ‘favour’ in question to fall to B instead of C: a wish that is a necessary feature of envy but is irrelevant or missing in begrudging spite (and of course necessarily missing in emulation)<sup>75</sup>



We may now ask, in what sense might emulation be thought of as a moral virtue (*qua* ‘good thing and characteristic of good people’). Holding in view Aristotle’s specification of emulation, according to which those who ‘think themselves deserving of goods they do not have’ are emulous, we might be tempted to infer that emulation is one of the specific emotional virtues subordinate to justice: namely, pain at one’s own undeserved bad fortune. There are, however, two distinct, if interconnected, reasons why we must resist the equating of emulation with such self-reactive desert based distress: first a moral and second a logical one. The first reason is that it seems morally wrong to say that emulous persons have suffered undeserved bad fortune; they do not as yet have a moral claim on anyone else, either to feel for them or to do something for them. Their only ‘claim’ is on themselves to improve, so that they may in the end deserve the goods they desire – in which case they will eventually be entitled to self-reactive pain at undeserved bad fortune, as well as to the compassion of others, if they do not receive the goods they deserve. The second and more fundamental reason is that, logically speaking, one’s deserts cannot be future-oriented. We may deserve something on the grounds of our past or present accomplishments, but if we conceive of deserts as a tailored fit between (1) certain states of affairs and (2) specific (desert-relevant) qualities and actions of individuals, such a conception is logically out of place until the relevant qualities or actions have been instantiated.<sup>76</sup> When Aristotle, the logician *par excellence*, says that the emulous think that they are deserving of goods they do not have, he must mean that the emulous think of themselves as the kind of people who would be able to actualize the relevant qualities or actions and, *as a consequence*, come to deserve the fitting goods. This would also help explain Aristotle’s claim that the emulous person ‘is making an effort to attain good things for himself’.<sup>77</sup>

Emulation cannot be considered a virtue *qua* pure emotion: ‘distress at the apparent presence among others [...] of things honoured and possible for a person to acquire’.<sup>78</sup> Emulation can only, like many of Aristotle’s moral virtues, be considered virtuous *qua* amalgam of reaction and action. The relevant emotional ‘distress’ is one necessary element, but another and equally important element is the ambition – the zeal – in this case the striving to equal or excel over another person and thereby deserve the goods which the other person presently enjoys. The lazy stick-in-the-mud cannot be emulous in this sense; nor can the one who merely admires another – no matter how fervent the admiration – without making an effort to acquire the admired qualities.

From the above considerations we can say that as a virtue, emulation requires all four of the following components: (1) the emotion of distress at the relative absence amongst ourselves of desired, honoured goods which someone else possesses; (2) the zeal to make efforts to acquire (deservingly) similar goods without taking them away from the emulated other; (3) true self-understanding and rational self-persuasion, which directs us towards goods that are attainable for us and, thus, towards future honours of which we can realistically become worthy; and (4) a striving for goods that are ‘appropriate attributes of the good’<sup>79</sup> that is, goods that are morally worthy or, at least, not morally unworthy. This last component accounts for Aristotle’s claim that contempt is ‘the opposite of emulation’, for those in a proper situation to emulate or be emulated become contemptuous of others who have the (morally) bad attributes that are the ‘opposites of the emulated good ones’<sup>80</sup> All in all, emulation turns out to be a complicated emotional virtue, the actualization of which requires considerable intellectual acumen and moral discernment: the ability to feel, see and judge things correctly.

What, then, would Aristotelian role-model education look like in practice? Let us focus on two points of emphasis. In the first place, it would highlight moral content: the reasons why the given quality to be emulated is morally commendable, how it contributes to human well-being. It would see moral exemplars as representative, rather than constitutive, of moral virtue. To be sure, we may ‘know a heap of things’ about a virtue simply by seeing it enacted by virtuous persons; and following the example of the virtuous is, in fact, the way in which young people learn to be virtuous. If we want to understand fully the nature of the good life and the role of the particular virtues in such a life, however, we need objective, exemplar-independent standards to help us grasp that truth. That is precisely what is meant by taking account of the cognitive element of emulation. In the second place, Aristotelian role modelling would take account of the affective element of emulation by trying to evoke in moral learners an inwardly experienced, emotionally driven demand for self-transformation and by reminding them of the truth that no one can construct for you the bridge upon which you must cross the stream of life – no one but you yourself. This emotionally driven demand would then be felt as pain at their relative lack of the desired moral quality, and the educator would show the learners how such pain could only be alleviated by their taking reasonable and realistic steps themselves to acquire the quality in question.

Jan Steutel and Ben Spiecker endorse two Aristotelian claims in terms of education of feelings having a central role in moral education: the first is that becoming a

virtuous person should be taken as the general aim of moral education; the second is that moral virtues are not only dispositions for choice and action but also dispositions towards feelings – virtuousness implies having appropriate feelings.<sup>81</sup> Aristotle himself emphasises that the earlier one begins, the better; “the importance of having been trained from infancy to feel joy or grief at the right things.”<sup>82</sup> This pre-supposes that the affective life of the child not only can be influenced but can be educated. Although Aristotle locates feelings in the non-rational part of the soul, they can obey and listen to the rational part. In his words,

Not just in the sense that feelings can be kept under control if they are contrary to the precepts of reason (which is typical of continence), but also, and more importantly, in the sense that they can be harmonised with the voice of reason by their being transformed, moulded or reshaped (which is typical of virtuousness)<sup>83</sup>

Steutel and Spieker list various types of educational interventions in the Aristotelian tradition through which the affective life of the child can be transformed and steered in the right direction: reading stories, taking the child to the theatre and cinema, and providing opportunities for mimetic enactment of poetry, song and dance, so as to encourage the child to emulate virtuous models and learn to discriminate.<sup>84</sup> However, the central method of cultivating feelings for Aristotle is *ethismos* or habituation. The idea that habituation is an important ingredient of education of feelings is another part of the ‘hard core’ of the Aristotelian tradition. Habituation was referred to previously as primarily a form of learning by doing. Steutel and Spieker are only two authors among many who quote Aristotle’s well-known lines in respect of this:

By doing the acts that we do in our transactions with other men we become just or unjust, and by doing the acts that we do in the presence of danger, and by habituating ourselves to feel fear or confidence, we become brave or cowardly.... It makes no small difference then, whether we form habits of one kind or another from our very youth; it makes a great difference or rather all the difference...<sup>85</sup>

No child will acquire virtuous affective dispositions, if we confine our educational activities only to verbal instruction or teaching moral lessons. Though Aristotle left very few indications about how to put habituation into practice but his use of the term *pollakis*, which literally means ‘many times,’ implies that, to be efficacious, habituation implies doing virtuous actions frequently.<sup>86</sup> Whilst habit becomes habit only through strength of

repetition, our understanding of reinforcement learning in this context is differentiated from that of conditioning by the positive context of reception advocated by Aristotle in respect of habituation. Furthermore, he points out in several places that virtuous actions should also be performed consistently, that is, one acts always in a virtuous way, and, as far as possible, never in a way contrary to virtue.<sup>87</sup>

Finally, though the child is not yet able to decide which action should be performed in the particular circumstances, she is able to perform those actions that correspond with virtuous dispositions of feeling, given the guidance of her parents in particular or other tutors, provided that they themselves possess practical wisdom. We may describe parents, guardians, teachers, and so on, as a child's 'tutors.' The term 'tutor' refers to any caregiver who points a child in the right direction in action and feeling in the process of habituation. To my mind, 'tutor' is a felicitous choice for anyone responsible for habituating children, and it will be used here with its implicit sense of careful steering. Some forms of habituation are ways of modifying what may be termed 'excessive' feelings. Cultivating the appropriate dispositions of feeling that constitute the virtue of patience, for example, is a matter of what Steutel and Spieker describe as:

[M]oderating the child's liability to respond with excessive feelings of impetuosity, irritation and boredom by accustoming him to situations in which patient behaviour is required.<sup>88</sup>

One assumes that the 'situations' are stage-appropriate to the child's developmental level, are rendered interesting, and that the young child's 'patient behaviour' is appropriately rewarded. These might be thought extrinsic pedagogical factors, but they are still apt for philosophical consideration. Admittedly, Aristotle's examples of habituation refer only to virtues of will-power, especially temperance and courage, where habituation is a matter of attenuating or getting rid of inappropriate affective dispositions. To be successful, the latter, like all forms of habituation, needs to be effected in a developmentally appropriate manner. A young child who has bad temper is led to understand gradually, from earliest days, that this form of behaviour is socially unacceptable, by a quiet but firm removal from the scene. The first crucial feature or importance of early habituation is revealed when tutors have to deal with a young teenager having temper tantrums in public. A more urgent message has to be conveyed on the spot both for the sake of others as well as that of the young person; when calm is restored it may then be possible to use the latter's verbal and social skills in order to see how the problem may be addressed.

The second feature of habituation is that of strengthening or promoting the growth of virtuous affective dispositions, a process which is arguably at the heart of the education of moral feelings. Aristotle addresses this form only implicitly in his assumption that the young child's tutors, parents in particular, themselves possess practical wisdom; they not only can guide her but can also model appropriate virtues. According to Philippa Foot, the virtues are corrective, in that they either moderate excessive temptation or compensate for deficiency in motivation. So, the corrective function of moral virtues such as justice and benevolence is quite different from the virtues of will-power. The former corresponds rather to making good or remedying deficiencies of motivation such as a lack of respect for the rights of one's fellow-citizens or a limited concern for other people's needs, respectively.<sup>89</sup> Aristotle does not specify how the virtuous dispositions of feeling required to be just and kind towards others are to be brought about through habituation. We must now ask ourselves if his work gives us a clue, as to how habituation establishes and strengthens the concerns and commitments that make up, for example, justice and benevolence.

The third feature of habituation is – the reliance of the child on the practical wisdom of her tutors – points to an explanation of how habituation might work towards the growth and development of virtuous affective dispositions. Of course, the child should follow the instructions of someone who is practically wise. But the practical wisdom required for giving the child the proper instructions is only one of the reasons for Aristotle's thesis that the tutor must be virtuous:

Being a virtuous person not only implies having the intellectual virtue of practical wisdom: it also implies having essentially moral virtues, and these virtues might best be construed in terms of particular *cares* or *concerns* ..... Such virtuous cares and concerns are not merely dispositions to act in certain ways..... but also dispositions to have and exhibit particular feelings or to feel and exhibit particular emotions, such as compassion, sympathy, respect, indignation, distress, relief, admiration and gratitude.<sup>90</sup>

Given the fact that the tutor is a person with virtuous cares and concerns, habituation may now be seen as a more nuanced and relational process. When the child is acting rightly, the tutor will respond in word or deed with positive feelings and emotions, exhibiting pleasure, relief or pride. And when the child is acting wrongly, the tutor will show negative feelings and emotions, such as sorrow, anger, or disappointment. Especially in respect of the latter, it is assumed that the tutor's responses are appropriate

to the situation, for example, expressed to the right degree, in the right manner, not some public humiliation. Moreover, all the tutor's manifestations of virtuous cares and concerns serve as reinforcing or punishing stimuli:

In particular, if there is a mutual loving relationship between the child and his tutor, which will normally be the case if the tutor is his parent, the child will experience the tutor's positive affective responses as pleasurable and the negative affective responses as painful. In more general terms, the tutor will function as a model..... The tutor's virtuous cares and concerns will be exhibited in virtuous deeds and appropriate affective responses, and given a good relationship of love and trust between the tutor and the child, the child will be inclined to imitate those actions and responses.<sup>91</sup>

So, the presence of a virtuous tutor is a key-factor in establishing and strengthening the scope of the child's cares and concerns where these are deficient. A school can be a living embodiment of such a philosophy by encouraging pupils to perform virtuous acts "deliberately" on a daily basis. At the root of its success will not be that it is brainwashing its pupils into performing acts of friendliness, kindness and fairness, but that the pupils are constantly being made aware that they can decide whether or not they want to do these things. These acts are superogatory to acts of discipline such as observing good order in class. At every level, the pupils are made aware that they shape the school's ethos with their own collective decisions: even a simple ritual like standing up when the teacher comes into the room – something that has disappeared from many schools – can be presented as a habit that inculcates a virtuous comportment. Moreover, a good school recognises something that Aristotle saw as crucial in shaping a decent moral society – an understanding and appreciation of the external, cultural environment and the tradition it provides:

[I]t is difficult to get from youth up a right training for virtue, if one has not been brought up under right laws....different soils better or worse nourish the seed.<sup>92</sup>

David Carr examines the connections between a number of claims concerning education in general and moral education in particular. He makes a convincing case on four fronts: education is about broad cultural initiation rather than narrow academic or vocational training; he recommends an education that has a prime concern with the moral dimension of personal development; emotional growth has an important role in such

moral formation; literature and other arts have an important part to play in any education of feelings. In respect of the last claim, Carr argues that:

[W]hat is needed for a clear view of the moral educational relevance of literature and the arts is a conception of moral education that does justice to the interplay between the cognitive and the affective in moral life, and that a non-relativist Aristotelian ethics of virtue holds out the best prospect for such a moral education of reason and feeling.<sup>93</sup>

Carr is careful to differentiate a moral education based on Aristotelian ethics of virtue from 'Character Education.' Moral education has an essentially cognitive component in it; the ability to make moral judgements based on sound reasoning is a very important aim of moral education and it has to be deliberately cultivated. Moral education also involves a great deal of understanding, moral feeling and intellectual mastery. Whereas character education is a form of personal character formation which has been introduced into schools, particularly in North America, in the last twenty years. Its proponents claim that this type of moral education also originates from Aristotelian virtue ethics. Similarly to what Carr advocates, they too make use of literature and the arts in primary and secondary education. However, their emphasis is not so much on the education of feeling and deciding whether one wants to do these things for oneself, as on the more practical or experiential initiation into such moral dispositions as self-control, responsibility, truthfulness which assist the discipline and general ethos of the school. Thus, character educators are more inclined to draw out exemplary role models to be found in literature for emulation by students. The advocates of 'Character Education' concentrate more on using literature and the arts for inculcating virtuous behaviour. They show a less sophisticated understanding of the relation of literature and the arts to Aristotelian ethics of virtue than that of Carr, who views the relation of the two as a powerful means of cultivating moral virtue, feeling, and emotion, as well as aesthetic values.

Thus far, we have two strategies for tutors to help students make good choices: raising awareness by general discussion about virtues within the school; inspiring understanding of the virtues by how literature and the arts are taught. Moreover, whilst discussion of morally pivotal moments can be integrated into everything in the curriculum – history and science come to mind – literature and the arts are also particularly appropriate for the cultivation of moral feeling on account of their appeal to

sensibilities, as Carr suggests. The latter does not happen by ignoring the complexity or beauty of the story or picture and jumping to its “moral” but by connecting the aesthetic effect of the story or picture to discussion about the feelings it evokes. General questions could include: What did this poem make you think about or feel? Tell me about X – what kind of person was she? What words does the poet use to convey the wastefulness of war?

A further strategy, clearly depending on habituation of children from a young age, if their choices are to become spontaneous later, is that of encouraging practical action for those less fortunate than themselves. Finding what can be done for the latter, whilst learning to appreciate what we have in common as fellow human beings, is a hallmark of pupil exchange programmes. Another appropriate strategy at all levels in school and in all areas of enquiry is that of fostering reflection by the tutor’s questions. For example, students may be asked to think about and give their own responses to a question such as: Can a person be “great” (and good) and still have some character flaws? This kind of reflection is akin to Habermas’ argument. Habermas in his work argues that moral judgement is best developed through a kind of idealized conversation.<sup>94</sup> He claims that the distinctive idea of moral discourse is not to find universal laws but a general law that will be agreed to be a universal norm. In this way it is possible to escape from mindless acceptance of given rules and from mindless relativism which suggests there are no moral norms at all. The only norms that can claim to be valid,’ says Habermas, ‘are those that meet (or could meet) with the approval of all affected in their capacity as participants in a practical discourse’.<sup>95</sup> The essential point of discourse ethics by Habermas is formulated in the *principle of Universalization* and what it entails - namely, the *principle of discourse*. Habermas reformulates the Kantian version of the principle of universalization in terms of intersubjectivity. To begin with, the principle of universalization explains what our everyday, but postconventional intuition would outline for us as a strategy for solving moral conflicts: the principle of impartiality. Habermas insists on the principle of impartiality that first makes possible a formal framework for both different mores and acts of solidarity. Concomitantly, the principle of universalization (U) is formally stated as follows: A norm is valid only if "all affected can accept the consequences and the side effects of its general observance for the interests and value orientations of each individual which could be freely accepted jointly by all concerne."<sup>96</sup> In this way, the principle of universalization formally determines those conditions which must be met if the claim of legitimacy - the claim



advanced by moral commands and norms - is really justified. This principle is at the same time a principle for argumentation, because it summarizes the normative implications bound up with the situation of 'entering into an argument.' These implications can be summarized as follows: *equal participation* of all who are affected; the *postulate of unlimitedness*, i.e., the fundamental unboundedness and openness concerning time and persons; the *postulate of freedom from constraint*, i.e., the freedom, in principle, of discourse from accidental and structural forms of power; and the *postulate of seriousness* or authenticity, i.e., the absence of deception and even illusion in expressing intentions and in performing speech acts. We have to presume these principles counterfactually, even when we know that people usually don't act that way. For Habermas, the principle of universalization and these concomitant postulates should be applicable to the critical examination of practical, everyday norms. The principle of universalization is applied in the *principle of discourse*: "only those norms can claim to be valid that meet (or could meet) with the approval of all affected in their capacity as participants in a practical discourse."<sup>97</sup> The problem lies in the subjunctive parenthetical phrase: Are we supposed to think that the practical discourse could also function adequately with substitutes, with advocates in place of those who are affected? As an example, we must decide as advocates for generations yet to come. But Habermas, as I understand him, wants to disqualify discourse in those cases in which "expert discussions" assume a "place-holder" function for those who cannot represent themselves, precisely because the principle of discourse requires that all who are affected - not simply their assumed advocates - be able to participate: "Required is a 'real' argumentation in which those who are affected cooperatively participate. Only a intersubjective process of understanding can produce an agreement that is reflexive: only then can all participants know that each has been convinced by all."<sup>98</sup> Habermas is here referring to an idealized conversation through which moral agreement is reached. It is this idealized conversation through which a group discussing contestable and problematical matters of real concern comes to better judgements and (sometimes) a consensus which is the ultimate aim of a community of enquiry.

Children's reflective thinking develops in co-operative situations through talk, and with the help of a range of artefacts from pencil and paper to computers. Co-operative learning is often used to achieve a variety of ends, including socialization, but if it is to achieve cognitive and curriculum objectives then it needs careful design. Research into group work shows that the teacher has a vital role to play in structuring the social

and cognitive context of learning. Teachers have to exercise the executive control, or mediation of group learning experiences. Similarly, if students are to benefit from the social distribution of intelligence involved in a community of enquiry they need help in recognizing opportunities, in managing the cognitive burden and in maintaining motivation. They also need an experienced manager to mediate the process, so that eventually they can themselves take over the executive function and become autonomous in the social learning situation. So how is this achieved? Children and their teacher sit in a circle and share some reading and listening. The children take some thinking time to devise their own questions and to discuss them. The group meets regularly. The questions get deeper and more thoughtful. The pupils' discussions get more disciplined and focused, and yet also more imaginative. The topics for discussion are chosen by the children themselves, and they cover a range of personal, social, moral and cultural concerns. The process by which this is achieved is called a community of enquiry. This community of philosophical enquiry contribute to the moral and social development of children in schools.

A community of enquiry has both a cognitive and a moral dimension. Learning to listen to and respect the opinions of others is part of the caring for others that is central to the values of many schools. But how is caring achieved, and is it a sufficient basis for moral education? Education by all standards is a profoundly moral endeavour. Teaching other people's children is an awesome responsibility.<sup>99</sup> It is an awesome responsibility because this teaching is not only about content, but also about learning together. Learning together is embedded in the relationships we develop in our classrooms and our schools.

Another aspect of virtue that is key to moral education is embedded in care or what is known as relational aspect of morality as developed largely in care ethics. Noddings defines caring for someone as being committed to meeting the needs of the other, not in the sense of dutifully assuming the burden of care but as a result of a form of motivational displacement in which one apprehends the other's reality. One wants what the other wants and totally identifies with the other's point of view. The other's needs are expressed in terms of 'I must'. One does not manipulate or act on the basis of one's own preconceived notion of the good but is totally receptive to the other and his or her situation and perspective. One does, however, act in the light of one's own 'ethical ideal', one's own best conception of one's moral self. One's moral self is enhanced as one cares more deeply or casts the net of one's caring more widely but may be diminished if one

allows oneself to abandon a caring relationship or restrict the range of one's caring. Unlike moral rules, caring does not prescribe particular actions.<sup>100</sup> These will depend on the needs of the cared-for and the concrete details of his or her situation. It is for this reason that the feminine response to hypothetical moral dilemmas is so often to demand more information about the situation or the individuals involved. In the Ethics of Care there can be no question of universalisability since no two situations, the needs of no two cared-fors, the potential for response of no two persons caring can be sufficiently similar to make this possible.

So much has been said about methodological issues in moral education. We shall now turn to examine the moral values and attitudes that are needed to be developed in Nigerian students. As stated elsewhere in the body of this work, moral values are not only imperative in any educational enterprise, such moral values must have cultural relevance. However, such moral values are the ones that are generated in social discourse and not from religious dogma. Many scholars seem to miss the mark in their attempt to provide the requisite content of moral education. Many, as we have discussed in chapter two, failed to clearly understand African perspective on issue of morality. Many scholars like John Mbiti and Bolaji Idowu have painted a pervasive religious outlook in African society. In the words of Mbiti,

...traditional religions permeate all departments of life, there is no formal distinction between the sacred and the secular, between the religious and the non-religious, between the spiritual and the material areas of life. Wherever the African is, there is his religion: he carries it to the fields where he is sowing seeds or harvesting a new crop; he takes it with him to the beer party or to attend a funeral ceremony; and if he is educated, he takes religion with him to the examination room at school or in the university; if he is a politician he takes it to the house of parliament.<sup>101</sup>

This position implies that religion remains the keystone to any moral discourse. This line of thought has continually informed the persistence of scholars to invest African moral worldview with religion. Unfortunately, this same perception has continued to be dominant among European and American scholars. Elaine Haglund quoting William Bascom and M. J. Herskovits voiced the same primordial misunderstanding of African world-view thus:

Whatever their verbalizations, Africans have by no means given over their allegiances to traditional supernatural forces when they have accepted the deity of another people. Rather, the new deity

is added to the totality of supernatural sources on which they can call for aid.<sup>102</sup>

However, contributions from many African scholars have consistently established the social root of morality. For example, Oladipo commenting on Wiredu and Idowu's response to Mbiti's assertion thus:

It should be noted, however, that although the belief in a Supreme Being is widespread in African culture, the people do not worship Him, as the Christians, for example, do their God. Rather, they relate more directly to the divinities or deities. These divinities are believed to be more accessible, and it is to them that the people take their immediate problems. Here is a contrast between the idea of the Supreme Being in African culture and the Christian notion of God, which makes the identification of the one with the other problematic. More on this later. Now, it has earlier been observed that Africans believe in the existence of many divinities, together with "a whole host of other extra-human beings and forces and that this has also been taken as an expression of their profound religiosity. However, it is doubtful that these divinities can appropriately be regarded as religious objects to which the people have a religious attitude. This judgment is based on the following considerations... most of these divinities are man-made in the sense that they are originated and maintained by human beings.<sup>103</sup>

Oladipo thereafter asserts that the source of ethics and morality in African culture is distinct from religion. According to him, African cultures extol the virtues of community and that moral obligations are primarily social rather than individual, and that communal factors often take precedence over individual rights or interests. The impression that morality is predicated on a religious foundation is meant as derogatory commentaries on the moral universe in which Africans live. This supposition that religion serves as foundation of morality is therefore based on an improper understanding of the principles that fashion the moral and social fabric of African societies. In African moral sphere, the individual is responsible to himself, family and the society. The society is equally responsible for the well-being of all members of the society. In Oladipo's words:

It may seem that morality is a personal thing, first and foremost. This is only partially true, from the African perspective. The artificial separation of individual moral responsibility from that of society is the result of superficial thinking. It is obvious that the context in which moral obligations arise is an interactive one. It is the social milieu in which competition for the scarce resources of

the environment takes place. But it is not only the resources of the environment that are scarce. The human resources of love, patronage, recognition, compassion, companionship, etc. are also scarce, and require deliberate efforts in both their generation and equitable distribution. Here lies the crux of the moral responsibility of society to its members and to itself. And this fact is represented in numerous ideas in African moral thought.<sup>104</sup>

What Oladipo is saying is that African moral world is one that synergises the individual and community in a social atmosphere. The two reinforces each other to promote their well-being. To further corroborate the synergy that exists between the community and individuals, Oladipo cites Gbadegesin thus:

From this it follows that there need not be any tension between individuality and community since it is possible for an individual to freely give up his/her own perceived interest for the survival of the community. But in giving up one's interests thus, one is also sure that the community will not disown one and that one's well being will be its concern. . . . The idea of individual rights, based on a conception of individuals as atoms, is therefore bound to be foreign to this system. For community is founded on notions of an intrinsic and enduring relationship among its members.<sup>105</sup>

In a related manner, 'Tade Adegbindin affirms the position of scholars who deny morality as a subset of religion in Africa. He avers that religion is not a competing foundation theory of morals in African societies. Using the traditional Yoruba society as an example, Adegbindin argues that the Yoruba are people whose approach to morality is essentially dynamic since there are many deities each having his or her moral formulations for his or her devotees to follow. This implies that the Yoruba people like other tribes in Africa serve different deities and if this is the case, then it becomes difficult to tell how they will organise their social life from a moral perspective if we deny them an independent source of morality.<sup>106</sup> Ethics in African societies have a social base such that relationships are rationally premised and religious acrimony was non-existent. Infact, one major way of describing persons in African society is morally embedded. This is why a person bereft of morals is seriously scorned regardless of educational attainment. A person of good character is an '*Omoluwabi*'. The concept *Omoluwabi* is an adjectival Yoruba phrase, which has the words- "*Omo+ ti + Olu- iwa + bi*" as its components. Literally translated and separately, *omo* means 'child', *ti* means 'that or which', *Olu-iwa* means the chief or master of *Iwa* (character), *bi* means 'born'. When combined, *omoluwabi* translates as "the baby begotten by the chief of *iwa*". Such

a child is thought of as a paragon of excellence in character. The concept *Omoluwabi* is however ambivalent. This ambivalence has allowed scholars to subject it to several interpretations. For example, Segun Gbadegesin identifies one when he interpreted *Olu-iwa* as ‘God, the creator of every baby’ and as every baby is an *omoluwabi*.<sup>107</sup> Though, Gbadegesin’s interpretation is not absolute in Yoruba literature, as *olu-iwa* could denote a dignified parent with excellent character. However, *olu-iwa* may create an exemplar of character or a baby as a person of dignity; yet, there is no guarantee that the baby would remain an exemplar of character like the creator of the biological father. And the ambivalence can also be seen in possibility that the child may turn out to be an *Omoluwabi* while not born by someone with good character.

Sophie Oluwole’s interpretation is however more semantically plausible than Gbadegesin’s and reflective of the Yoruba cultural experience. In her own interpretation ‘*Omoluwabi*’ is etymologically *Omo ti o ni iwa bi* (a child whose character takes after...). According to Oluwole, the phrase “*Omo- ti- o ni- iwa-bi*” definitely does not make a complete sense because it is a grammatical construction that still awaits a completion because we can easily raise the question: “*Omo ti o ni iwa bii tani?*” (a child whose character takes after...who?).<sup>108</sup> In answering or completing this interrogative phrase, Oluwole avers that *Omoluabi* means “*Omo ti o ni iwa bi eni ti a ko, ti o si gba eko*” (A person who behaves like someone who is well nurtured and lives by the precepts of the education he or she has been given). Therefore, the Yoruba word *Omoluabi* may thus be appropriately rendered as a conflation of three interrelated descriptions. These are:

*Omo ti o ni’ wa bi* (A person who behaves like...)

*Eni ti a ko* (Someone properly nurtured)

*Ti o si gba eko* (And who behaves accordingly)<sup>109</sup>

This combination thus gives us a good picture of *Omoluabi* in Yoruba culture wherein a person is given a deep knowledge, wisdom, and therefore be trained to be self discipline and to develop a sense of responsibility that shows in private and public actions which earns individuals social integrity, and personality in Yoruba society. And in contrast with *eniyan-keyan* or *eniyan la-san*, which means ‘caricature person’, or be described as ‘eranko’ (beast or aberration of person) and *omokomo* (a worthless child), an *Omoluabi* can also be defined as a ‘good and cultured person’.

Hence, it is common among the Yoruba to use the adjectival *eniyan-gidi* meaning ‘an ideal person’ as a synonym to *omoluwabi*, a ‘good person’. And in Rowland

Abiodun's discussion on "Identity and the Artistic Process in the Yoruba Aesthetic Concept of *Iwa*", he describes "an *omoluwabi* as someone who has been well brought up or a person who is highly cultured".<sup>110</sup> Thus, when people are described as cultured or uncultured – as *omoluwabi* or *omolasan* – as the case may be, a general description is being given of personhood as to whether or not an individual is socially integrated or is a misfit or a cultural deviant within a given social setting or social organization.<sup>111</sup> The rendition of 'Omoluwabi' by Oluwole is very relevant and key to our discourse. The first part ' *Omo ti o ni' wa bi* ' is suggestive that a person is critically assessed by the kind of character she exhibits. (A person who behaves like...). The second part is that virtuous character is learned. The home and the community have the responsibility of educating the young and new members in those values that promote individual and societal sustenance. The third part is that individual freedom is protected within the ambit of the community. It is envisaged that some individuals may refuse the tutelage of the home and society and thereby becomes a deviant or embrace the training and by that token become a responsible member of the community.

According to Michael Omolewa, traditional African education is always used as the information base for the community, which facilitates communication and decision-making. An important aspect of traditional African education is the acquisition of knowledge where everyone is taught different things like the identification of the planting seasons, good soil and harvest methods, herbs and fishing methods. And this knowledge which is in form of skills and morals is imparted in youth through a phased childhood and adolescence. In addition, Omolewa argues that education in traditional African society aims at inculcating attitudes and moral values capable of integrating the individual into the wider society. Infact the ultimate objective is to produce a person guided by wisdom.<sup>112</sup>

In line with the above, habituation and teaching of virtuous character remains unassailable in African society. Parents, members of the extended family and the entire members of the community were all involved in raising the young ones through arrays of activities ranging from moonlit stories, proverbs, riddles, role modelling, songs, idioms, etc. In all of this, older members of the society tie appropriate stories or proverbs to the prevailing issue and bringing out the salient moral lessons for the young ones. Also old members of the community advance the above by ensuring that they live harmoniously and cooperatively with others in the community so as to promote the good of the individual and the society at large. According to O.A. Oyeshile, sharing resources,

burden, and social responsibility, mutual aid, caring for others, inter-dependence, solidarity, reciprocal obligation, social harmony and mutual trust promotes communal living.<sup>113</sup>

In practical terms, Ishengoma Johnson for example exemplifies riddles in African traditional education as one form whereby rationality, moral value and intelligence is promoted among children in Haya society. According to him, riddles and other oral traditions such as folktales are important media for transmitting indigenous education, knowledge and skills to children in many parts of rural Africa. Riddles play an important role as a means of socialization and social learning and also facilitate aesthetic appreciation among children, especially in rural areas where the majority of Africans still live.<sup>114</sup> He argues that African riddles and other oral traditions such as folktales, historical legends, proverbs and myths can also teach 'practical things' to children.<sup>115</sup> Citing Ishumi, Ishengoma observed that Haya indigenous education represented a dynamic system in which moral and character training, practical activities and training in philosophical reasoning were inseparably intertwined. He further affirms that the main features of Haya education were common to African indigenous education in general.<sup>116</sup> According to him, folktales, myths and historical legends are all weaved together in traditional African society to promote morals and other values. His words,

In traditional Haya society, riddles, folktales, myths, and historical legends constituted part of the education (informal and formal) imparted to children and youths. Apart from the oral traditions mentioned above that were used to impart knowledge, the Haya also had a formal education system known as omuteko (age-set). Under the omuteko system, boys aged 10-12 received an intensive two-month training at the royal palaces. The omuteko curriculum, as Ishumi shows, covered practical training in military warfare and tactics, moral instruction, self-discipline and self-control, agriculture and animal husbandry, legal matters, and sports such as wrestling and hurdle-jumping.<sup>117</sup>

Relatedly, Boateng Felix in his article argues that fables in traditional African society contain moral messages for the youth. He avers that fables are still very relevant and useful in the educational curriculum. In his words, "fables in the form of trickster stories conveyed moral lessons, and,... were more "pedagogic devices rather than literary pieces."<sup>118</sup> Many of these tales were carefully constructed to inculcate the societies values into children. The communicative power of these forms of moral education is comparable to modern cinema. The differences lie in the fact that whereas



the modern cinema puts the images before the child, the African child had to imagine and develop his own mental pictures. But much more, the fables and folklores bear on adults' cultural experiences and arrays of ingredients for communal living. The modern cinema on the other hand projects western cultural experiences and most especially, materialistic and individualistic ways of life. However, the cinema will still be a good medium to project those fables and stories useful for promoting moral education.

Another aspect of traditional education promoted moral education was in the area of proverbial sayings. Proverbial sayings are widespread in Africa, and their themes bear strong similarity to one another. The educative and moral power of proverbs in traditional Africa lies in their use as validators of traditional wisdom. Children are brought up to believe strongly that proverbial sayings have been laid down, and their validity tested, by the forefathers. Proverbs, like other aspects of traditional African culture, are inextricably linked with the education of children. Among the Yoruba and Igbo of Nigeria, Fante and Asante of Ghana, correct procedure in interpersonal relations is stressed through the large number of proverbs outlining patterns of accepted behaviour. There is a pronounced tendency on the parts of adults to moralize and communicate indirectly to children by the use of proverbs. Many proverbs, mostly dealing with respect due to elders, obligations to kinsmen, or the proper attitude towards chiefs are used in moral education of children in regard to the acceptable standards of social behaviour. Proverbial sayings are always preceded by credits to the revered ancestors. "It is our ancestors who said . . ." <sup>119</sup> is a clause that precedes proverbial sayings to affirm that the message from the proverbs began with the very genesis of the community.

Proverbs, folklores, fables, stories were not just used to morally educate the young ones to embrace truthfulness, honesty, chastity, respect for elders and other virtues. Adults are also expected to act out in their personal and public relationships those virtues that were encouraged among the children. According to Boateng, under traditional African education, children's beliefs in and acceptance of morals, lessons, and roles drawn from legends, proverbs, and were reinforced by practical examples in adult life relative to the norms of the societies. <sup>120</sup>

## **5.5 Conclusion**

The important role that education can play, at home and school, in the moral development of children hardly needs emphasizing. The problem emerges when the question is raised about how moral judgement is to be taught. The simple answer is that

schools should teach what is 'right' and 'wrong'. On this view teaching consists in upholding certain core values, such as truth telling, care for others and following socially prescribed rules. But moral education must be more than teaching these core values, no matter how commendable these values may be. Values taught didactically may not be internalized, may not become part of the beliefs and values of individual children. The point is that children need to learn that all moral acts have reasons, and they need the skills that will help them to deal with the moral conflicts that they will face in an uncertain world. Children are characterized by conflicting natural tendencies—to be generous and to be selfish, to be competitive and to be co-operative, to love and hate and so on. In trying to teach our pupils to be thoughtful and reasonable persons, with the capacity for resolving conflicts in themselves and in society, we must see that the school environment, and classroom practice, is thoughtful and reasonable. Moral education, as opposed to moral/religious indoctrination, cannot be conducted without treating children as rational beings capable of reasoning about conduct. One way to do this is to create a community of enquiry in the classroom that embodies the social forms of reasoning and of respect for others. Through participating in a community of enquiry children learn how to reason and can cultivate the social habits required for good moral conduct. Moral education undertaken in a community of enquiry can make a contribution to values education programmes as well as developing language and thinking skills. It can help children develop the skills and dispositions that will enable them to play their full part in a pluralistic society. It can boost their self-esteem and intellectual confidence. It does this by creating a caring classroom community where children learn to:

- i. explore issues of personal concern such as love, friendship, death, bullying and fairness, and more general philosophical issues such as personal identity, change, truth and time;
- ii. develop their own views, explore and challenge the views of others;
- iii. be clear in their thinking, making thoughtful judgements based on reasons;
- iv. listen to and respect each other;
- v. experience quiet moments of thinking and reflection

To this extent, some of the vital goals and quality of instruction in the National Policy of Education in Nigeria will come to the fore as crucial basis for moral discourse. Some of the goals include:

- i. Development of the individual into a morally sound, patriotic and effective citizen.
- ii. Respect for the worth and dignity of the individual;
- iii. Faith in man's ability to make rational decisions;<sup>121</sup>

Given our discussion above, a deliberate inclusion of moral education in the Nigerian educational system will help to properly balance educational activity which pays attention to both knowledge acquisition in different fields of specialities and also raise pupils' awareness and encourage them in moral activities in all their dealings.

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## Conclusion

This thesis builds up from chapter one to contend that a careful study of the concept of education will reveal the moral value aspect of it which is missing in Nigerian educational system and by implication Nigeria education is not providing a moral education. The second is that increasingly, society has lost its way morally. The increasing vices and violent symptoms of social breakdown such as cultism, serial murder, internet fraud, acts of terrorism, drug addiction, smuggling, vandalism, in the educational institutions in particular and the society in general. The pervasive and growing inability by many religion scholars to distinguish the specifically moral from the religious is one major hiccup in the preoccupation of moral education in Nigeria. The thesis insisted that there is a clear difference between morality and religion and that the latter will fail to provide basis for moral education.

On the strength of the above, we anchor the research on Aristotle's theory of virtue. The explanatory force of this theory unlike the divisive nature of religion provides the required platform to push our position. Aristotle is of opinion that the moral agent should act out of virtuous motivation, and act directed towards happiness or flourishing. Therefore: "In addition to performing outwardly approved actions, young people must be brought to see the point and value of such conduct and act as they do out of a conviction that it is a right and admirable thing to do."<sup>1</sup> Children will need to be taught not just to do right because it is imposed upon them, but they will need to aspire it for themselves, as they turn their virtuous behaviour into habits. Another very important aspect of moral education is the cultivating of a child's affective life, and thus emotion. According to Steutel and Spiecker "[...] moral virtues are not only dispositions for choice and action but also dispositions towards feelings. It is with respect to how one feels and not merely to how one chooses and acts that one may be said to be virtuous."<sup>2</sup> Emotion is thus an important moral motivator and essential in the decision---making process. This results in the need for moral education, to teach the child to use its reason to control the irrational part of the soul where emotion is located, in order to find the mean. This again emphasizes the need for practice, and guidance by morally wise tutors. This leads to another important aspect of Aristotle's ethics; that of individuality. A child must be taught to individually examine any particular situation and the relevant moral issues. Nancy Sherman writes: "[...] a moral judge has an obligation to know the facts of the case, to see and understand what is morally relevant and to make decisions that are

responsive to the exigencies of the case.”<sup>3</sup> This increases the pressure on an individual, and again the need for guidance. In this process, it is of utmost importance that the child develops its practical wisdom. Sherman explains this as follows: “[...] Good moral choices are responsive to the circumstances in which an individual finds him or herself an agent has a moral obligation to know the facts of the case. This does not preclude the use of general rules, but they are, at best, only rough guides, summaries of past actions, a part of our web of background knowledge useful in understanding a case.”<sup>4</sup> This quote emphasizes that it is crucial for a child to be taught about tradition, about society’s values. Because making moral decisions is such an individual process, the child needs to know about every aspect involved: from general moral background to particular interests. Moral life thus appears to be a *practical* sphere of endless human enquiry and conduct, in which training and habituation have an important part to play.<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore, natural disposition or blind faith in tradition is not what constitutes virtue; true virtue is a deliberate choice.<sup>6</sup> Thus, true virtue is a delicate equilibrium of assessing, practicing, and habituating. This all starts with the appropriate value perceptions that will be communicated by mature and practically wise adults.

This brings us to the moral values that are embedded in the Traditional African milieu. These values are to partly constitute the content of moral discourse in the moral education classroom. According to Gyekye, a humanist conception of morality is most likely to eliminate controversies surrounding the foundations of moral value. Also, a morality whose central focus is the concern for human well-being would expectedly be a social- not individualistic- morality, altruistic thrust.<sup>7</sup> This point is worth emphasising here. Our belief in African moral value is hinged on its social nature and its primary focus on the promotion of both communal and individual well-being. The values become more expedient in our contemporary world where people especially the educated elites commit all manners of vicious acts in pursuit of wealth and other materialistic possessions. This humanistic moral outlook embedded in African culture is a justification for its consideration in the moral education programme. A critic may possibly argue that the past especially African past is totally irrelevant in the contemporary world and such does not merit consideration. The likes of Kolawole, Marcien Towa and Paulin Houtondji belong to this group. For example, Towa insists that any attempt to revisit the cultural values of the African would remain irrelevant to the present goals and concerns of the contemporary period in Africa. In his words, “An

original African philosophy torn from the dark night of the past could not be, if it ever existed, but the expression of a situation that was itself in the past.”<sup>8</sup> In my mind there is a little merit in this position. The point of Towa’s argument is anchored on the way Europe completely subjugated Africa and easily infused her with European values. If African values can easily fall like a pack of cards at the invasion of foreign values, then it does not merit our attention. In reaction to Towa and other antirevivalists, Gyekye debunks the extremist positions of both the antirevivalists and the revivalists. He avers that some ancestral cultural values and practices indicates that vestiges of ideas and values such as democracy and human (natural) rights that are prominent in the contemporary world can surely be detected on the cultural terrains of a very distant past. By implication, the idea or value or practice or institution of a distant cultural past can be revived or adapted by later generations, if this generation considers it worthwhile to do so. Infact, we find this applicable both in theory and experientially in Europe. While it advances in science and technology, it does this by going back in time to sift knowledge of the past with the aim of improving on it. However, without prejudice to the above, the position of this thesis is that not every aspect of a cultural past ought to be revived or given a place in the scheme of things in the present. The simple reason being that some cultural practices are negative in nature especially in the areas of evelopment and science. As Gyekye puts it, “The lack of the appropriate attitude toward sustained scientific probing required for both vertical and horizontal advancement of knowledge, appears to have been a characteristic of the African cultural past.”<sup>9</sup> In effect, the cultural moral values we have alluded to in this work are those ones we considered germane to improving Nigerian youths moral outlook.

Another important issue that we consider expedient to raise has to do with the general old argument that it is a commonplace in history that men eminent for their goodness have sons who are, if not equally eminent for their badness, at any rate, not above the average level. This seems to be taken from Plato's Protagoras, where, however, it is evident from the context that it is rather political capacity than goodness in its more modern sense that is primarily in view. In neither case is the argument very convincing. The instances referred to can hardly be taken as normal. Generally, the influence of the father can be traced in the son. And certainly from a careful study of biography, we should be disposed to conclude that most good men-as well as most good politicians-have had good fathers, and still more uniformly good mothers. To say the

reverse is an exception. But, even if we allow that there are a considerable number of exceptional cases, it would still be open to us to inquire whether those fathers who were so "eminent for their goodness" were also eminent for their skill in teaching young children. If not, the utmost that would appear to be established by their failure is that example is not enough without precept. It might, indeed, be urged that what is brought out by this argument is the necessity for a more systematic teaching of morality than that which can be given even by the best of parents. At any rate, I am convinced that it is a good argument for the importance of having teachers of morals thoroughly trained. The argument certainly does not show that virtue cannot be taught; but that it does in some measure show that it is not altogether easy to teach it.

Following from the above, J. S. Mackenzie raises some fundamental questions I also wish to raise here: What are the chief difficulties in the way of moral education? What I wish specially to consider here are some difficulties that have recently been raised with reference to the attempt to teach morality directly and systematically, even on the assumption that the teacher has a sufficiently coherent view in his own mind as to what the essential principles of morality are. Significantly, it would appear that the perceived obstacle that is yet to be addressed in the teaching of moral education is based upon the conception of contrariety on ideas. According to Mackenzie the doctrine of Suggestion is entirely favourable to the work of moral education.<sup>10</sup> Nothing could be more encouraging to the teacher of morals than the conviction that every idea that is brought vividly before the mind tends to work itself out in act; and this is what modern psychology is making more and more apparent, not only with reference to human life, but to that of the lower animals as well. The mind, in all its aspects and in all the stages of its development, is essentially dynamical; and all its ideas are forces. But there is a natural dialectic in the human mind, and to some extent in the animal mind also; and this is what is emphasized in the doctrine of "contrariant ideas." As the mind develops, it begins to react more and more upon the suggestions that are brought before it, and at certain stages tends to resist them. And what is urged by some of the critics of moral education is, in effect, that the presentation of moral ideas to the minds of the young is to a large extent a casting of pearls before swine. They are sure, sooner or later, to turn and rend us. It is contended, at least, that there are certain stages in the development of the young at which it would in general be true that to set moral principles emphatically before them is just the way to insure that these principles will not be followed. Now, it cannot be denied that there is some truth in this doctrine; and it is a truth that ought to be borne in mind in all departments of education. "Determination is

negation." The growth of individuality means to some extent the growth of a power of resistance to foreign elements, the development of the faculty of saying, "No"; and this is an element of character which it would assuredly not be wise to disregard. It is strongest in the strongest natures; and there are stages in the growth of personality at which it is specially important that it should be encouraged. It was something of the same sort that was in the mind of Plato when he spoke of the stage of development at which young men are like puppy-dogs, delighting in tearing everything to pieces that comes in their way.

A man of any force of character is generally against the government until the time arrives when he enters into his own kingdom; and this attitude of resistance often appears at a comparatively early stage. This fact has perhaps been too much forgotten in many of our educational methods. Too often, instead of stimulating an interest in children, we may be stimulating a disgust. This is a case when the parents or the teacher is a little too insistent. The pupils may have felt that, if they were to have any self-respect, they must strike out on a different line. By implication, there is undoubtedly a certain degree of contrariety or "contrariness" in human nature and I think a skilful teacher need not despair of leading even his most refractory pupils-provided, at least, they are not stupid, as well as obstinate-into some degree of decency of behaviour. But even beyond this, the discursive method we adopted from Habermas will help prevent the critics' supposed negative reactions from the pupils.

The difficulty I consider important comes in with the teaching of what is too purely negative. To say that a man or a boy is not to do something is always of the nature of a challenge. It is putting an obstacle in his way; and what an obstacle suggests to a mind of any practical activity is that it has got to be removed or overleaped. I believe that the use of the terms "direct" and "systematic" in connection with moral education has a good deal to do with the raising of objections of this particular kind. To teach a thing directly and systematically, it should be remembered, does not necessarily mean that we are to try to force it down people's throats. Geometry is usually taught directly and systematically; and I believe it has sometimes been taught in such a way as to rouse a certain degree of contrariety. If a pupil were told that he must believe that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, he would be very likely to proceed at once to find out reasons for denying it. But the skilful teacher knows how to avoid this. He does not tell his pupil what the angles are equal to: he rather suggests methods by which the pupil may find it out for himself. This is the secret of all good teaching; and it

is a secret that was known, with regard to the teaching both of geometry and of morality, as far back as the time of Plato-probably even farther. It is possible, however, to press even this point too far. I have sometimes heard it urged-especially by those who are concerned with the teaching of very young children that the child must be taught by means of direct injunctions, and that to lead it to deliberate is only to suggest doubt. Probably the methods must vary a little at different stages of development. But even older children are sometimes more impressed by a "straight talk" than by more insidious methods of suggestion. Few people, whether old or young, like to think that they are being got at indirectly from behind. My own belief is that the skilful teacher, like the skilful pig driver, would sometimes be poking on his pupils pretty directly, and sometimes leaving them rather to find their own way along.

Those who urge this difficulty about contrariety seek in general, as I understand them, to throw discredit on the systematic teaching of morality, and to maintain that it ought to be entirely incidental. On this I may just say a word or two. It is sometimes contended that all the teaching in a school should be moral teaching; that the ethical element should enter into all the lessons, into all the games, into all the discipline, into all the organization of the school. This ideal can hardly be so easy in a day school, and especially in a school with large classes and elaborate time tables. In such schools everything that is only incidental must tend to be crowded out. Nor can I altogether believe that even under the most favourable conditions the teaching of conduct could, without serious detriment, be treated as entirely incidental. Its position in the school may be, to some extent, compared with that of the mother tongue. The abandonment of the teaching of mother tongue for example, on the pretext that the children can speak the language would surely not afford the children opportunity to thoroughly learn if there were never any direct and systematic teaching of it. So I should think it must be with morals. It may be that in a well-organized and well-conducted school the time devoted to it need not be very great; but I am convinced that there ought at least to be certain occasions on which the principles contained in the incidental teaching of it could be brought to a head, summed up and driven home.

On the whole, then, I conclude that the general principle of Suggestion cannot fairly be used as an argument against the attempt to introduce the systematic teaching of moral education into all our schools; provided always that it is fully recognized that in different kinds of schools it may have to be introduced in different ways. This leads us to

Mackenzie's important general lessons that we may learn from the doctrine of Suggestion. They include the following:

1. Moral teaching should be concrete, carrying a direct suggestion of something to be done, not a mere statement of general principles or reflections on life.
2. It should, as far as possible, be positive, rather than negative. To call attention to a wrong action is often to suggest what might not otherwise have occurred to the mind; and may tempt the young inquirer to give it at least a trial.
3. It should be practicable. Remote and inaccessible ideals carry no direct suggestion.
4. It should, as far as possible, be of the nature of an auto-suggestion, seeming to be a discovery of the child himself and to issue from his own spontaneity.
5. It should be adapted to the stage of development of the mind for which it is intended.
6. It should be in harmony with the actions of the teacher himself.<sup>11</sup>

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